

Wizards of debt – creating money out of thin air

New

Internationalist

Putting the world to rights since 1973

NI 486 October 2015
newint.org

**Refugee crisis –
people's solidarity**

**Can Burma's
elections be fair?**

**Barcelona's radical
housing fix**

**The
transgender
revolution
and how it
could free us all**



CANADA & USA \$6.95



New Internationalist

Gifts & Publications 2015



ONE WORLD CALENDAR 2016

Price \$23.95 Code 16CAL

12 powerful pictures to grace any wall. Large format, spiral bound, one month to view. Dual format – use as an art photography calendar or open up to reveal space for appointments. Photo only view size: 56cm x 28cm. Open size: 56cm x 56cm.



PLAN B DIARY

Price \$17.50 Code 16YP

A practical weekly planner with an edgy collection of photos, illustrations and street art by up-and-coming artists. Size: 21cm x 15cm.



ONE WORLD ALMANAC

Price \$21.95

Code 16ALM

Enjoy 53 inspirational photos in this week-to-view diary. Its unique triangular sit-up format makes it perfect for your desk, but it also folds up neatly for your bag. Size: 21cm x 11cm.



EVERYDAY DIARY AND NOTEBOOK PACK

Price \$17.50 Code 16NOTE

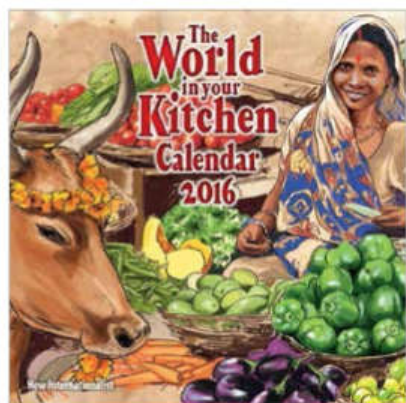
A pocket diary and a matching journal-style notebook. Each cover is taken from a larger piece of specially commissioned artwork, so that there are subtly different versions of both the diary and the notebook. The diary is one-week-to-view. Flexibound. Size: 14.5cm x 9cm. 144 pages.



ONE WORLD GREETINGS CARDS

Price \$12.95 Code 16CRD

Pack of ten cards, two each of five photographs selected from the New Internationalist One World Calendar. Size: 10.5cm x 21cm.



WORLD IN YOUR KITCHEN CALENDAR

Price \$17.50 Code 16KIT

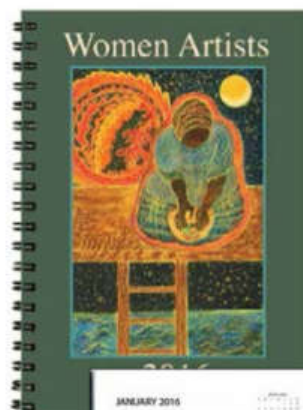
A unique wall calendar with colour illustrations by Cam Wilson and a delicious vegetarian recipe every month. There is plenty of space for your appointments too. Open size: 59.4cm x 29.7cm.



FAMILY CALENDAR

Price \$17.50 Code 16FAM

A bright and brilliant idea for a busy family, shared house or office! Each month has five columns – one for each person. Open size: 59.4cm x 29.7cm.



WOMEN ARTISTS DIARY

\$16.95 Code 16WA

Celebrate women's creativity with this daily source of inspiration and renewal. In a world of fleeting digital dates and hasty messages, the unfilled space of this diary remains an always fashionable repository of your own. Size: 18cm x 13cm



NEW INTERNATIONALIST

THE NEW INTERNATIONALIST workers' co-operative exists to report on the issues of world poverty and inequality; to focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and powerless worldwide; to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary to meet the basic needs of all; and to bring to life the people, the ideas and the action in the fight for global justice.

The New Internationalist (NI) magazine was founded by Peter and Lesley Adamson in 1970. Together with a range of other publications it is published by New Internationalist Publications Ltd which is wholly owned by the New Internationalist Trust and co-operatively managed:
Accounts: Frank Syrratt.
Advertising: Michael York.
Administration: Anna Weston.
Design: Andrew Kokotka, Ian Nixon, Juha Sorsa.
Editorial (Magazine): Vanessa Baird, Dinyar Godrej, Jo Lateu, Hazel Healy, Chris Spannos, Jamie Kelsey-Fry.
Editorial (Publications): Chris Brazier.
Mail Order: Bev Dawes, Emma Dunkley, James Rowland.
Marketing (Magazine): Amanda Synnott, Rob Norman.
North American Publisher: Ian McKelvie.
Marketing (Publications): Dan Raymond-Barker, Kelsi Farrington.
Production: Fran Harvey.
Web and IT: Charlie Harvey, Pete Stewart.
North America Publisher: Ian McKelvie.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To update your subscription with address changes etc or to contact us with any other subscription queries:
Website: www.newint.org/subscriptions
You will need your subscriber reference number which is on the magazine address label.
Email: newint@csglobal.ca
Phone: 1-800-661-8700
Fax: 905-946-0410
Canada PO Box 819, Markham, ON L3P 8A2
US Box 1062, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-1062

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

Canada: 1 year \$44 (plus GST or HST) Foreign (by air) 1 year \$70
GST 121784854 US: 1 year \$44 Foreign (by air) 1 year \$70

Subscribers in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Japan should contact their local subscriptions office whose addresses can be found at: www.newint.org/about/contact/

North American
Editorial Office
2446 Bank Street, Suite 653
Ottawa, ON K1V 1A8 Tel: 613-826-1319 Email: nican@newint.org

Advertising: Michael York Email: michael@emsm.org.uk

Permissions: Contact the editorial office. Member of Canscop.
Reproduction of all material in New Internationalist, excluding photographs, is free to primary and secondary schools.

NEWSSTAND DISTRIBUTOR: Natalie Dalton, Disticor Direct,
ndalton@disticor.com
Publications Mail Agreement number 40063336. Return
undeliverable Canadian addresses to Circulation Department, NI
Magazine, PO Box 819, Markham, ON L3P 8A2.

US periodicals postage paid at Niagara Falls, NY (USPS 329-770). US
office of publication: 2421 Hyde Park Blvd, Niagara Fall, NY 14305.

US postmaster: send address changes to NI Magazine, PO Box 1062,
Niagara Falls, NY 14304.

Indexing: Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index Quarterly (CPI.Q),
Canadian Business and Current Affairs and the Alternative Press Index.
Available in full-text electronic format from EBSCO and Proquest.

The New Internationalist is published monthly except that the Jan/Feb
and July/Aug issues are combined.



[@newint](https://twitter.com/newint) facebook.com/newint

It helps us occasionally to allow carefully screened organizations
to mail our subscribers. If you do not wish to receive their material
please write to your subscription office.

© New Internationalist Publications Ltd. 2015
ISSN 0305-9529

ISO accreditation 9001-2008



The transgender revolution



A couple of years ago, at a National Union of Journalists

event in London, I heard a speaker from Trans Media Watch talking about the way in which the tabloid papers had 'outed' and hounded Lucy Meadows, a transgender schoolteacher who subsequently committed suicide.

The incident was an example of the gutter press at its most despicable – and ignorant. Trans Media Watch condemned it, of course. But they also set about working with even the most bigoted and offensive sections of the media to try to change the way in which transgender people and their issues were reported.

The work of transgender organizations is often two-fold – to provide practical and emotional support to transgender individuals, but also to undertake the massive task of educating non-trans or cisgender people.

This month's *Big Story* shows some of the progress being made, as well as the many challenges ahead. Most of the stories and illustrations are the work of transgender writers and artists, from different countries, while invaluable help has come from Christabel Edwards and Jennie Kermode of Trans Media Watch.

Elsewhere in this edition: as Burma heads for the polls, what is in store for its ethnic minorities? *Worldbeater*, meanwhile, takes a closer look at Wolfgang Schäuble, German finance minister and darling of the ruthless. ■

Vanessa Baird

VANESSA BAIRD
for the New Internationalist Co-operative
newint.org

This month's contributors include:



Amanda Palha, is a bisexual trans activist in São Paulo, Brazil where she works with people who are marginalized and on the streets. Amanda also writes a thoughtful and impassioned blog for the Brazilian online magazine, *Revista Geni*.



Jason Barker is a filmmaker, illustrator and animator who also works for Gendered Intelligence. His own gender journey has taken various twists and turns. He did the from cover for this issue and illustrations on pp 25-27. You can see more of his work at jasonnelvis.co.uk



Daniel Patino Flor is an Ecuadorian photographer currently working in Sweden as a photojournalist. In 2014 a selection of his work was published in the book *Ecuadorianos Retratos*.



Koren Helbig is an Australian freelance journalist based in Spain. She particularly loves telling stories of passionate women doing good in the world, and blogs about simple, soulful living at *She Makes Magic*.

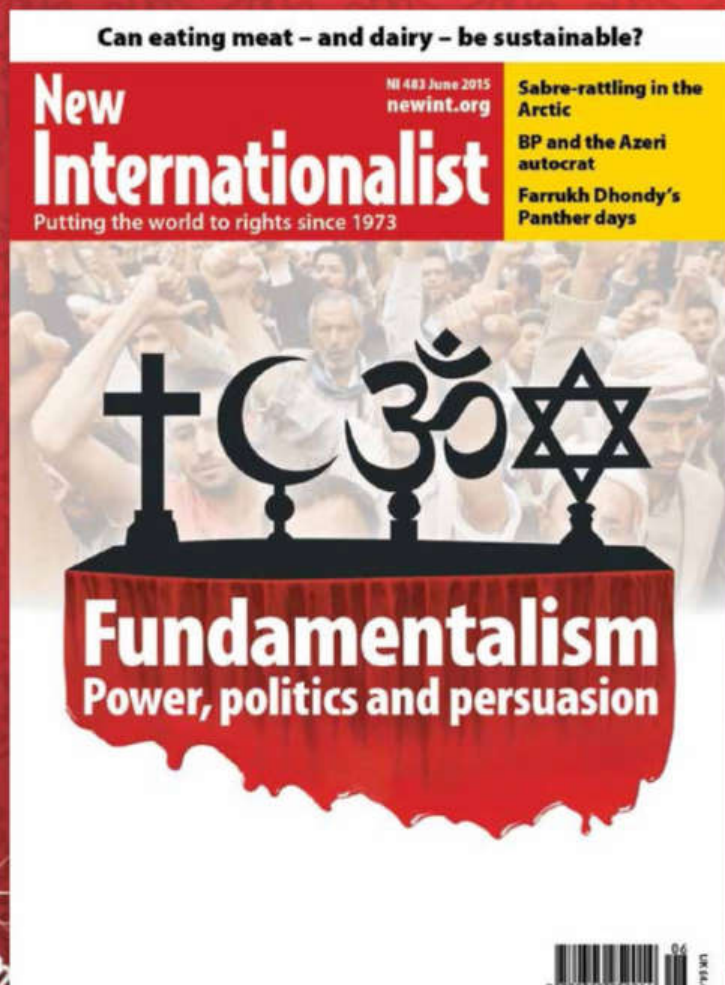
Coming soon:

**Climate justice:
the Paris summit**

**10 economic myths
we need to ditch**

**The refugee crisis –
what is to be done?**

Looking for the Perfect Gift?



Why not share
New Internationalist with
your family and friends this
holiday season?

Send a full year of
New Internationalist magazine
for as little as \$30!
That's a **savings of \$14 off**
the regular subscription price.

Includes **FREE**
access to our
digital edition!



PLUS when you order 3 or more gifts you will receive a
Bonus Gift for yourself – a **FREE** 2016 One World Almanac.
It regularly sells for \$21.95.



Enjoy 53 inspirational full-colour photos in this week-at-a-time diary.
It folds neatly as a portable diary and its unique triangular format also
makes it perfect for your desk.

Get a jump on your holiday shopping
by ordering your gift subscriptions at:

newint.org/go/gift1 or call 1-800-661-8700

Or use the convenient order form inside this issue. We'll take care of it from there.
Each recipient will receive a gift acknowledgement card on your behalf.

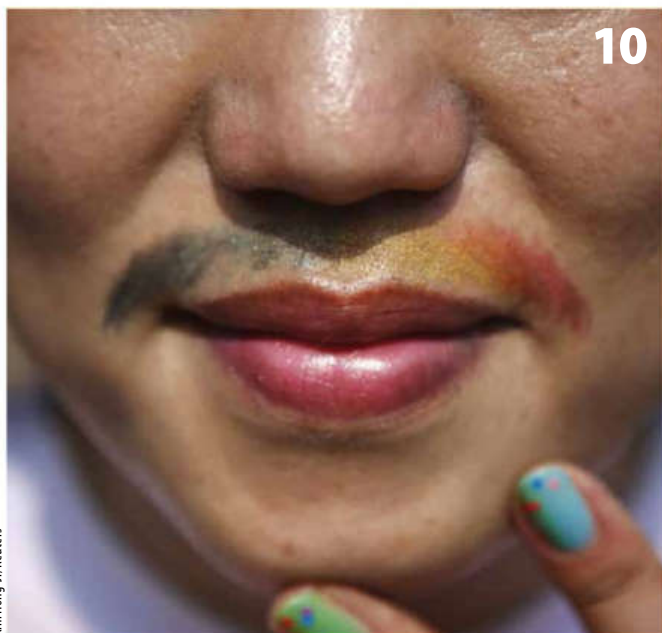
For the best service please place your order by December 15, 2015. GST or HST will be added where applicable. Overseas orders add \$20 for postage. We can invoice you for your gift subscriptions if you prefer. If you qualify for a free Almanac it will be sent to you upon receipt of payment.

Agenda

Stories making the news this month

- 8 Under-mining global giant Vedanta
- 8 Spain's radical housing fix
- 9 Life after rape in DRC
- 9 Introducing Pierre Nkurunziza
- 9 US victims of Agent Orange
- 10 Amnesty's sex scandal
- 10 Defying the king of Swaziland
- 11 Hungary's razor-wire welcome
- 11 Asia-Pacific trade deal talks stall
- PLUS: *Scratchy Lines* by cartoonist **Simon Kneebone** and **Reasons to be Cheerful**.

The Big Story – Transgender



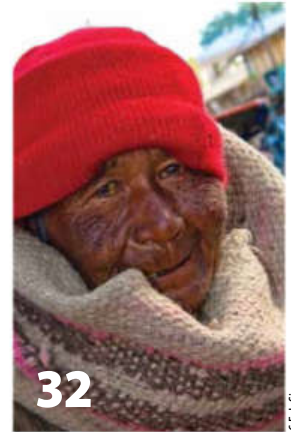
Kim Hong-Ji/Reuters

- 12 **The trans revolution**
It's about basic human rights – and relinquishing fixed ideas that are doing harm, argues **Vanessa Baird**.
- 17 **9 seriously easy things to do... to support trans people**
Advice from CN Lester.
- 18 **Where the children lead**
Marti Abernathey tackles the fraught issue of how best to help trans kids.
- 20 **Transgender – the facts**
- 22 **Staying alive**
Murder rates of trans people are high – but highest in Brazil. **Amanda Palha** gets to grips with transphobia.
- 25 **I am what I am**
Eight people – and their experiences – from around the world.
- 28 **Ma vie en jaune**
Jennie Kermode on being intersex.
- 29 **Action**
Groups and resources.

Front cover illustration: Jason Barker
Magazine designed by Andrew Kokotka and Juha Sorsa.
All monetary values are expressed in US dollars unless otherwise noted.

Features

- 32 **Minorities report**
Burma's elections this November will be closely contested – but will the country's ethnic minorities finally be heard? **Tina Burrett** reports.
- 42 **A Mars bar from Tommy Chocolate**
How is money – and debt – created? The answer, says **Peter Stalker**, may surprise you.



C.E.J. Simons

Mixed media

- 36 **Film reviews**
99 Homes, directed by Ramin Bahrani; **A Girl at My Door**, directed by July Jung.
- 37 **Music reviews**
Ya Balad by Bachar Mar-Khalifé; **Try To Be Hopeful** by The Spook School.
- 38 **Book reviews**
The Underground by Hamid Ismailov; **The New Threat** by Jason Burke; **The Wikileaks Files** by Wikileaks; and **America's Dreyfus** by Joan Brady.
PLUS **Also out there...**

Opinion

- 35 **Mark Engler**
A Pope in Washington.
- 41 **Kate Smurthwaite**
Down with love.
PLUS: **Polyp's** *Big Bad World* cartoon.

Regulars

- 6 **Letters**
Syrian tragedy; alternatives to capitalism; and shadowy co-ops.
- 7 **Letter from Bangui**
Giving a voice to the voiceless, **Ruby Diamonde's** friend Tatiana is an inspiration.
- 30 **Country Profile:**
Sudan
- 40 **Southern Exposure**
Daniel Patino Flor from Ecuador captures a moment of relaxation on Santay Island.
- 44 **Worldbeaters**
German finance minister **Wolfgang Schäuble**: ruthless schemer and reactionary heavyweight.
- 45 **Puzzle Page**
PLUS: **Marc Roberts' Only Planet** cartoon.
- 46 **And Finally**
Stories, silences and songs – Ethiopian musician **Meklit Hadero** talks to **Graeme Green**.



Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures

Praise, blame and all points in between? Give us your feedback.

The **New Internationalist** welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They might be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Letters should be sent to letters@newint.org or to your local **NI** office. Please remember to include a town and country for your address.



Above the din

Congratulations on your September 2015 issue (**NI 485**). Instead of your usual cacophony of ultra-leftist rhetoric, you reported brilliantly on Syria, the MDGs, the 'new economy' and Team Obama. The report on Syria should be awarded a prize and be read by all world leaders.

Robert Wrubleski Calgary, Canada

Blatant inaction

The human and material cost of the horrific conflict in Syria has been enormous. Since 2011, it is estimated that over 200,000 people have been killed. The UN figure is higher, at over 220,000. Of these, more than 63,000 were civilians, including at least 10,515 children. The remainder have been fighters of the regime and various factions.

Despite this harrowing death toll and the huge exodus of refugees, the world has largely ignored this brutal war and remained silent, refusing to take any meaningful actions to help end the massacres, the immense devastation and the appalling suffering of the people.

I find it heart-wrenchingly sad and beyond belief that after so many atrocities of the recent past, such as the Armenian genocide and the massive slaughter of Greeks and Assyrians by Ottoman Turkey, the large-scale mass murders by Nazi Germany

and Japan in World War Two, later massacres in Cambodia, Palestine, Rwanda, Argentina, Bosnia and elsewhere, and with the international community stating it would never allow such crimes against humanity to happen again, the world has done nothing to end this terrible carnage.

How much longer will the UN, the Arab League and the rest of the international community stand by and do nothing while this vicious war continues unabated? This blatant inaction is immoral and inexcusable. As much pressure as possible needs to be exerted on the world community to act and compel all parties involved to bring about a break in the fighting and create the conditions for a just resolution to the conflict that brings genuine peace, security and freedom to the people of Syria.

Steven Katsineris Australia

Greater adjustment

There are many inherent flaws in capitalism (**NI 484**) and it has long been recognized that there needs to be societal 'adjustments' to 'pure capitalism' via the people's representatives, the government.

The neoliberal agenda seeks to strip those adjustments by false claims about the extent of harms done by any limitations on unfettered capitalism. The results are unambiguous and the world is in big trouble as a result. However, the debate may need to focus on the lack of regulating mechanisms rather than 'capitalism' *per se*.

Alternative systems appear to demand a common motivation and level of consensus among citizens that is unrealistic. The messy free-for-all environment of a market-based capitalism has many flaws. It would appear that re-establishing mechanisms in the political realm to mitigate and counter those flaws is our best alternative. The

triumphalism of the neoliberal agenda must be undone or the damage and losses will prove catastrophic.

Bill Rathborne London, Canada

Shadowy co-ops

'Pathways and possibilities' (**NI 484**) quotes the number of jobs in co-operatives in Italy. This reality is not always bright and may be many-sided and shadowy.

In the recent *Mafia Capitale* case, co-operatives, controlled by supporters of former extreme rightwing organizations, were found to have supplied services to Rome city council (waste disposal and assistance to immigrants), overpricing their services thanks to a corruption and bribery network involving public officers.

Judicial inquiries following the death of an agricultural worker in southern Italy found out that some agricultural co-operatives are fake enterprises hiring underpaid illegal immigrant workers.

There have been cases of co-operatives suspected of being fake enterprises set up for mafia money laundering.

In many co-operatives, wages are as poor and working conditions are as hard and jobs as uncertain as in any private enterprise aiming at owners' profit. Their workers are often employed on a yearly basis and dismissed at year's end with no certainty of being taken on again.

Undoubtedly, there are also co-operatives that may be considered as alternatives to private businesses only aiming at profit. Like the ones belonging to the *Libera* association that confiscated farm lands from mafia bosses and whose members are constantly under threat from mafia clans.

Paolo Ferrario Turin, Italy

Growth imperative

Excellent edition on capitalism (**NI 484**). May I add one fundamental perspective on growth?

Growth may be an ideological precept. But underlying it is a real economic imperative that must (and can) be addressed.

Briefly:
1 Most of the world's money is no longer created by governments, who spent it

productively into the economy, no strings attached. Almost all of the money we now use is created by private banks.

2 The banks rent it to us – to individuals, to corporations, to governments. They create the money, they lend it to us, but – and it is a big 'but' – they do not create the interest.
3 So where does the rent money – interest – come from? It has to come from the creation of new wealth – mining the earth, clearing new foodlands, constructing new buildings. To pay the rent on our money system, we must have growth. That is the ineluctable growth imperative.

So it is not mere ideology; it is a real monetary system, created by human beings under capitalism. Can **NI** take a look at alternatives to the world's debt-based money supply? A non-interest-bearing money supply is an underlying requirement of any alternative to capitalism.

Gordon Coggins Tillsonburg, Canada

Essential unity

The content of **NI 484**, the main theme of which was out-of-control capitalism and its viable alternatives, made for some fascinating reading. For, sandwiched between moving accounts of what the world is really like today, there were a number of up-beat articles on how it could be.

But, I was left wondering, when will the former begin to metamorphose fully into the latter? To which the answer must be: once a more complete worldview saying that 'We Are All One' starts entering 'The Collective Consciousness'!

For, surely, without this change of consciousness, there can be no fundamental change of circumstance on this planet.

Colin Millen Sheringham, England

Ahem...

Re: *Country Profile* on Panama (**NI 484**) and John Kerry's calling it a 'narco-kleptocracy'. Is this the same John Kerry of the Forbes family that was involved in the importation and sales of opium to China in the 1800s along with many other notable US families such as that of Franklin Delano Roosevelt?

Rob Park Surrey Hills, Australia

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the **New Internationalist**.

Sisters of Joy

A friend's ebullience and inexhaustible drive to change things for the better inspires RUBY DIAMONDE.

The gâteau is pale sponge plastered

in icing and cream: it actually tastes all right, though so sweet it makes my teeth ache. But as soon as I set down my fork, Tatiana brandishes the cake knife and plonks another thick slice on my plate.

'No!' I protest, 'I can't eat any more!'

Tatiana laughs her wonderful loud dirty laugh. 'My sister – cake is good! You need to eat so you'll have the energy to dance this evening!'

Tatiana is not really my sister – she's a close friend, Central African collaborator, dance partner and veritable inspiration. She runs her own successful NGO – Femmes Action Plus (Women Action Plus) – which, in her words, exists to 'give a voice to the voiceless in our country'.

Tatiana set up FAP back in 2011, which was also the beginning of the most recent crisis in the Central African Republic. 'We started with a tiny office and just three people,' she explains as I start munching my way through the second slab. 'But now we have more than 200 people working with us, all over the country.' One of her passions is promoting women's rights, especially their right to education and to speak out about violence and violations in this traditionally patriarchal society. She has set up centres to train and educate women as well as supporting some of Bangui's most vulnerable children.

Another passion is the plight of Central Africans from Haute Mbomou province in the remote southeast of this country, who have been kidnapped by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army. As Tatiana has previously explained to me, even when they do manage to escape their captors, 'these victims face terrible stigmatization from their own communities; adults are suspected of

being traitors, and children born in LRA captivity struggle to be accepted by anyone.'

A handful of international organizations are based in Haute Mbomou, but the support of national NGOs is incredibly important, especially those like FAP who really understand the local context and culture. Tatiana regularly travels to the city of Obo in southeastern CAR to support these escapees, and I've accompanied her there several times.

It was on one of these visits, last year, while we were staying at the Obo Catholic mission (which incidentally sits on top of a small hill, has no electricity and looks, and feels, like a haunted house) that Tatiana announced: 'You and I are now sisters! You see the difficulties we face here in

our country and you know what we are missing more than anything in our lives – joy! I'm telling you, we are now the Sisters of Joy!'

I laughed out loud and agreed it was a great idea – as did the local priest.

When she and I returned to the Central African Capital, Bangui, where we both live, we went out dancing to celebrate our sisterhood with a wonderful rowdy group of other Central African women, who all promptly joined our 'sisterhood'. That night we all stayed out much later than usual, because we made each other laugh so much.

Women like Tatiana fill me with joy and inspiration.

She is becoming one of the most important community leaders in her country, and is a powerful advocate for Central Africans to develop on their own terms, and to respect and cherish their own culture. Despite many professional and personal difficulties (her house has been burgled five times since 2013), she is insatiable in her quest for her NGO to remain 'a voice for the voiceless'.

Recently she has been training at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and will soon begin collecting testimonies of LRA victims for the war crimes trial of a senior LRA commander who was recently arrested in CAR.

My Sister of Joy also recognizes that all organizations need to evolve in order to stay dynamic. She recently changed, or rather modified, the name of her NGO, which is now called Femmes et Hommes Action Plus, adding men to the title. Because, as she tells me while I am finally finishing off that second slab of cream-slathered sponge gâteau, 'At times like these, my sister, we need our brothers to walk beside us on the road towards peace and development and justice.' ■

Ruby Diamonde is a pseudonym.



GLOBAL PROTEST

Under-mining Vedanta

Protesters held angry demonstrations against Anglo-Indian mining giant Vedanta in seven locations across Africa and India on the same day in August. These far-flung and isolated communities united to accuse Vedanta of looting, polluting and devastating their homelands.

The company, which is 70-per-cent owned by London-based billionaire Anil Agarwal, saw its London AGM also hit with protests that day. Campaigners staged a theatrical boxing match outside, while dissident shareholders posed challenging questions inside.

Vedanta has been consistently opposed by communities where it operates. In 2013 the company lost \$10 billion when indigenous people and local farmers won a 10-year struggle to halt mining on the Niyamgiri mountain in India.

Around the world, Vedanta has been indicted for multiple crimes. In Korba, in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh, the company was found guilty of causing the deaths of up to 100 workers when a chimney collapsed in 2009. Vedanta's lawyers suppressed the results of the judicial investigation last year, but it was leaked to activists.

In Goa, Vedanta mined iron ore without permission for five years. Ramesh Gauns, an adviser to people affected by the mine, claims the company now owes the state \$2.2 billion: 'Vedanta was found by the Supreme Court to have been mining illegally from 2007 to 2012, thereby destroying people's livelihood and environment. The company should pay compensation, and Anil Agarwal should personally be brought to trial for breaching these laws.'



In the Zambian copper-belt, communities living around the mines and smelters of Vedanta's Konkola Copper Mines staged two days of protests against the company's continued pollution of the River Kafue, which has left local waterways devoid of life, and communities with long-term health problems.

In Rajasthan, miners who had been dismissed last December protested alongside local farmers. Berulal Meghwal, a Dalit farmer and union activist, said, 'Vedanta has flooded this area with money and bribes, and flooded my fields with phosphate mining waste. It has illegally acquired grazing land for phosphate dumps. No-one was compensated.'

Campaigners inside the AGM pointed out that Vedanta's share price has slipped 61 per cent this year, due partly to slumped commodity prices and the company's huge debt burden, and warned shareholders of dangerous times ahead.

Read the full blog: nin.tl/foilvedanta. ■

Samarendra Das and Miriam Rose

SPAIN

Radical housing fix

Relief may finally be at hand for people evicted from their homes during Spain's financial crisis. A new leftwing army of local and regional politicians, elected in May on pledges to act for the people, is already having an effect.

In Barcelona, new mayor Ada Colau spent her first day on the job personally halting several home evictions – as she did for years as an activist heading the Platform for People Affected by Mortgages (PAH). Colau continues to call bank managers on behalf of families to confirm temporary stays of eviction, and has reconvened the city's eviction prevention committee.

Colau ousted conservative Xavier Trias to be elected the city's first female mayor. After declaring the housing emergency her top priority,

she presented a poverty action plan in July to create 'a fairer and more equal Barcelona', focusing on housing, food, health services and employment.

Home evictions remain a hot issue in Spain, where thousands who lost their jobs amid the five-year recession have defaulted on mortgage payments. Unlike in other countries, Spanish citizens cannot declare bankruptcy, leaving many people hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt and without a roof over their heads.

In Madrid, new leftwing mayor Manuela Carmena pledged in July to stop privatizing city-owned subsidized housing, after a report found 6 in 10 evictions in the capital were from public housing units sold by Madrid administrations, under the direction of the conservative Popular Party (PP). The pledge means over 2,000 apartments will remain in the city's hands.

May's elections marked the ruling PP's worst result in 20 years. Eyes are now on the national election, due before December, with conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's future looking bleak. ■

Koren Helbig

20 years ago...



Some articles simply stand out in your mind more than others. And that was certainly true of Amanda Hazelton's article for our issue on Medicine 20 years

ago this month. Called 'How shall we live?', it recounted the terrible moment when she was told by her doctor that she had leukemia – and then talked about



Migration and the European push-factor

A fickle peace in South Sudan

Heathrow expansion? Plane stupid



DRC

Life after rape

The ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been the deadliest since the Second World War. More than five million have died and marauding militia groups have sexually assaulted hundreds of thousands of women and children.

But one surgeon is providing hope. Since founding Panzi Hospital in 1999, Dr Denis Mukwege has treated over 30,000 survivors of sexual violence.

He explains: 'The perpetrators of these crimes destroy life at its entry point. The women can no longer have children. Often they get infected with AIDS. Their men are humiliated. So the perpetrators destroy the entire social fabric of their enemies without even killing the woman.'

Panzi Hospital attempts to break this cycle by providing long-term support to rape survivors, including training in literacy and numeracy, small-business management, and psychological care.

A 13-year-old girl who was abducted and raped by soldiers is now in Dr Mukwege's care. She didn't realize that she was pregnant until she gave birth two months prematurely. She found it difficult to love her baby, couldn't produce milk. The infant was beginning to starve. But, after receiving treatment, both mother and baby survived. They now live in the hospital compound, learning skills to aid reintegration into the community. ■

Fergus Simpson

Full story at nin.tl/panzihospital

the changes in her life and in her sense of herself that inevitably ensued.

'The hospital world,' she said, 'is limited by the assumption that you will go through medical hell ("slash-and-burn medicine" as it was once described to me) just to survive, and that nothing else really counts. But this ignores what I see as the nature of healing. I was grateful for medicine, but I needed more. I needed to find meaning and adventure, to plumb the mysteries of life, to fill some of the gaping holes that hospitals do not even

Introducing...

Pierre Nkurunziza

The man nobody wants just won't oblige and fade into the woodwork. Nkurunziza has been re-elected president of the small east-central African state of Burundi despite opposition from the US, South Africa and the African Union. All believe this born-again Christian and Hutu nationalist is divisive and not entitled to run for a third term, because the Burundi constitution has a two-term limit.

Nevertheless, Nkurunziza swept to power with a landslide (nearly 70 per cent of the vote) this July. He called his victory (with less than 30 per cent turnout) 'a divine miracle'. Much of the opposition boycotted the election.

Nkurunziza fosters the 'man of the people' image so popular with the African political class; he spends so much time in the fields planting avocado trees that some Burundians have renamed the fruit *amaPeter* after him. But Nkurunziza's

dark side never seems to go away.

He is closely associated with the violence between Hutus and Tutsis that has killed hundreds of thousands of Burundians over the last two decades. Since protests against his efforts to get a third term, 100 demonstrators have been killed and independent media has been shut down. Nkurunziza has even outlawed jogging as a threat to national security.

There is widespread concern both in Burundi and abroad that Nkurunziza's impetuous and partisan approach will undermine the 2000 Arusha Peace Agreement that established a delicate balance of rights and obligations between Hutus and Tutsis. The memory of the genocide in neighbouring Rwanda remains a constant shadow ■

Richard Swift



Eric Miller/Wikimedia Commons

UNITED STATES

Secret Agent Orange

A war that ended 40 years ago continues to claim new victims – in the US as well as Vietnam. When the US military sprayed millions of gallons of Agent Orange herbicide over Vietnam – defoliating rural areas to deprive the Viet Cong of shelter – it wasn't known that its major component, dioxin, is a cancer-causing toxin.

More recently it has become clear that the herbicide also mutates

DNA sequences, causing devastating birth defects as well as cancers.

But thousands of children of Vietnam veterans are being denied compensation by the US government, which refuses to recognize most of the defects that are passed through paternal lines.

Tanya, 41, was recently diagnosed with thyroid cancer after enduring four hip replacements, several skin cancer operations and a hysterectomy. Although her veteran father was certified disabled following Agent Orange exposure and died from colon cancer three years ago, she is not eligible for help with her own vast medical bills.

'There are too many of us,' she says. 'It would be very expensive if we were compensated. They took a "deny until you die" approach with the veterans. Now they are doing it with the second generation.'

While tens of thousands still suffer from Agent Orange's toxic legacy in the US, in Vietnam the numbers run into the several millions. Dioxin-triggered mutations still plague families, with fourth-generation victims now being born. ■

Katie McQue

**Tweeting from 'paradise':
disappearances in the UAE**



**Scalpel please,
nurse... oh, wait!**



LAW

Amnesty's sex scandal

Amnesty International sparked a flurry of international criticism in August when it proposed the decriminalization of sex workers. The charity says its main goals are improving the welfare and rights of sex workers globally, and ensuring their equal treatment by the police, health services and employers. But critics claim decriminalization is a gateway to human trafficking and pimping.

The proposal follows a two-year consultation between Amnesty and sex workers, HIV agencies, anti-trafficking groups and women's and LGBTI rights activists. It draws on case studies on the impact of criminalization in Argentina, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea and Norway.

The findings point to criminalization as the main reason for the abuse and harassment of sex workers, often at the hands of the police, which in turn leads to under-reporting of abuse. They also show sex workers are discriminated against when accessing health services, especially HIV prevention, or alternative forms of employment. Transgender people emerged as the most vulnerable group.

On the other side of the argument lies an open letter from the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), arguing that decriminalization will be a boon for human traffickers. They cite Germany's open sex market, where brothels have flourished and human trafficking increased, and propose



Sex workers take to the streets in Paris, July 2015.

adopting the Nordic model instead, which aims to curb demand by shifting criminalization onto the clients.

The human trafficking claim is disputed by Amnesty, which says Norway still saw record numbers of human trafficking victims in 2014. Meanwhile, its model has driven sex workers underground, making the job less safe.

Sex workers themselves have rallied behind Amnesty's campaign. 'Why are so many people quick to judge sex workers... but so slow to listen to what we have to say?' wrote Kay Thi Win, co-ordinator for the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers. 'Many countries make policies that empower police against sex workers. Amnesty's policy seeks to empower sex workers... so we can address our social, economic, political and health problems ourselves.' ■

Cristiana Moisescu

Francis Guillot/ANP Photo

SWAZILAND

Defying the king

Maxwell Dlamini finally walked free in July. He was released on bail having spent 14 months in squalid conditions in the prisons of Swaziland's absolute monarch, King Mswati III. His crime?

He sang a pro-democracy song.

'Jail is a lonely place, and there are moments when you feel down,' says Maxwell. 'But at all times I was motivated by the fact that our cause is just. I refuse to abdicate my responsibility or allow the state to break me.'

Despite being harassed, tortured, repeatedly jailed and hit with trumped-up explosives charges, he is convinced that democratic change in his country is possible. 'I hope that I can inspire others to rise out of their fear and challenge this backward system of royal supremacy – not through desktop activism, but through open defiance. I call on the world to tighten the noose around the regime's neck until it wilts and collapses.'

Maxwell went to university in 2007. But by the time his daughter was born on Christmas Eve last year, he had still not completed his studies. Instead he was in jail, for being a high-ranking member of the banned political party PUDEMO (People's United Democratic Movement).

In Swaziland, over two-thirds of the population survive on less than a dollar a day, while the all-powerful royal family lives in opulence. The regime has targeted Maxwell since 2010 when he first demanded socio-economic justice and democratic change. He describes harrowing treatment following his first arrest: 'I was tied to a bench with my face looking upwards, and they suffocated me with a black plastic bag as a huge police officer sat



Scratchy Lines
by Simon Kneebone

HUNGARY

A razor-wire welcome

As the Hungarian government races to complete a steel barrier along its 175-kilometre border with Serbia, a small but dedicated group of citizens is offering humanitarian assistance to migrants.

Conservative Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has been garnering support for the four-metre-high fence by denouncing multiculturalism and linking migrants to terrorism. Officials argue that the country cannot cope with the swelling numbers of mostly Afghan and Syrian asylum-seekers arriving from Greece. Some 100,000 migrants entered Hungary in the first six months of 2015, compared to 35,000 in the whole of 2014. The vast majority are simply using the country as a staging post in their journey onwards to Western Europe.

But not all are hostile. In the capital Budapest and elsewhere, volunteers self-organize, often under the umbrella of migrant solidarity group MigSzol. They distribute food, water, clothes

and information to new arrivals.

Sometimes medical care is also necessary. The fence's razor-wire is not deterring the desperate. 'We are seeing young boys with long, deep cuts who have to be given stitches by our paramedics,' says Zsofi Amirzadeh, who supports migrants in the city of Pécs, near the Croatian border.

Train stations are hubs for new arrivals. 'We are here 10 hours a day, seven days a week. We are doing the government's job,' says Zsofi. But in a country where 46 per cent of the population considers themselves to be anti-immigrant, solidarity comes at a price. 'I am afraid when I leave the train station, in case I get beaten up by rightwing idiots,' Zsofi admits.

To ease pressure on countries receiving a high proportion of migrants, in May the European Commission (EC) submitted a proposal to find a fairer way to admit and distribute them. Spain and Slovakia blocked the idea but the EC is still pushing for mandatory quotas for refugees across the EU. ■

Lydia James



on my stomach. They did that over and over till I collapsed. They told me they would kill me for causing trouble.'

Exonerated after a year in jail, he was detained again in 2014 with PUDEMO

President Mario Masuku, charged with singing a pro-democracy song and shouting 'viva PUDEMO!' He was held for over a year before being released on bail.

Despite being keen to finish his undergraduate degree, he is determined not to put personal ambitions above the struggle for a free and democratic Swaziland. Despite their ill-treatment, he and PUDEMO are willing to negotiate a democratic settlement with the monarch and government. He urges the world to play its part by monitoring the situation and demanding that the king hold honest and constructive negotiations with Swaziland's democratic movement. ■

Peter Kenworthy, Afrika Kontakt

TRADE

TPP stumbles

A sweeping Asia-Pacific trade deal suffered a serious blow in early August when talks stalled. While 400 protesters took part in the largest-ever 'conch-shell-blow' outside the Hawaii hotel where Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations were taking place, progress was the opposite of record-breaking.

The US and other potential future TPP signatory nations Canada, Australia, New Zealand/Aotearoa and Japan came away empty-handed after failing to resolve some major areas of disagreement. Aggressive US negotiating positions on pharmaceutical and other medical corporations were said to be partly to blame. 'The US is using its bully power to force the failed and abusive US market model of privatized healthcare on countries that have strong public health systems,' campaigners Popular Resistance told *The Guardian*.

Negotiators left Hawaii without a schedule for the next meeting. With national elections likely to put TPP on ice until 2016, campaigners are seizing on the delay to step up organizing, in an attempt to ensure the deal is never completed. ■

Jess Worth

Reasons to be cheerful

Saudi women to vote

In a move to appease some of its critics, Saudi Arabia has allowed women to vote and run as candidates in upcoming municipal elections. With more than 70 women already registered as candidates for the December poll, women's rights campaigners in the country have welcomed the move, announced as far back as 2011, as an important first step towards equality.

Coal matters

The local council in Newcastle, Australia, home to the largest coal-exporting port in the world, has voted to divest from any environmentally damaging entities, including the country's Big Four Banks. Newcastle City Council is the seventh council across Australia to shun dirty energy. Locals there have hailed this step forward to a cleaner city, free from the coal trains and coal dust marring its landscape.



Lion relief

Following a ban on wild animals performing in circuses in Peru and Colombia, Animal Defenders International have rescued 33 lions who will

be given the chance of a new life: a one-way ticket to the Emoya Big Cat Sanctuary in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The big cats, severely abused during their circus days, will join eight other rescued lions living at the sanctuary.

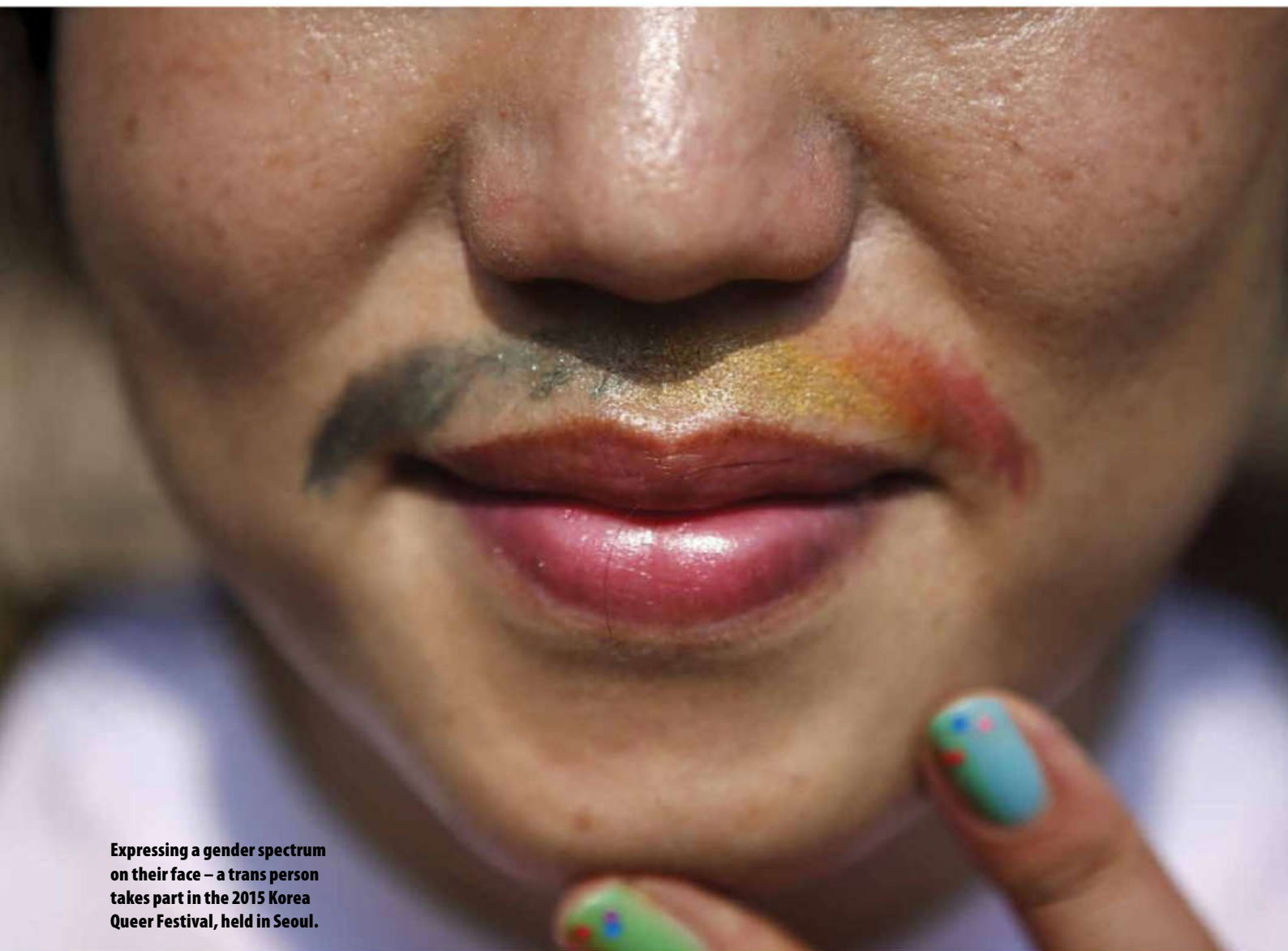
Weed freed

In the market for medical marijuana? If you live in Europe, look no further. For \$99 you can buy 10 mg worth of medical marijuana pills online, from Australian-based company MMJ PhytoTech. The pills contain Cannabidiol, a strain of marijuana which does not cause the better-known intoxicating and psychological effects of the drug.



The trans revolution

It's in the air – and calling for a mindset reset. VANESSA BAIRD tracks the course of transgender rights and their liberating potential for us all.



Expressing a gender spectrum on their face – a trans person takes part in the 2015 Korea Queer Festival, held in Seoul.

The sun streams in through the open windows of a corner house in Old Street, East London.

Inside people are milling about, making coffee and tea, rifling through second-hand clothes – including an original Vivienne Westwood T-shirt. Buying hand-knitted bears, home-made cakes, and getting their nails done.

Most are teenagers, a few are parents, some are volunteers. The teens chat about the

usual things – music, social media, college courses. And puberty blockers, hormones and transitioning. ‘When did you start?’ ‘How is it going?’ One is impatient for results. Another tells them that it takes time.

These are transgender – or trans – youth and the event is a fundraiser for a camping trip organized by Gendered Intelligence, a group set up to help youngsters navigate a world

dominated by very fixed ideas about gender and also ‘to spread a bit more intelligence’ about it.

In one part of the room, a screen is showing video blogs. Young trans people talk to camera about a range of issues that concern them – voice, language, make-up; the use of ‘they’ instead of the pronouns ‘he’ or ‘she’; the impact of austerity policies on health services. And they give advice.

What I am witnessing here looks like a gently evolving social revolution. Some in this room are clearly trans boys, some trans girls, some it would be hard to place too precisely on the gender spectrum. But they are expressing themselves authentically, talking about future plans, making their own way in what is, in this space at least, a supportive environment.

Jay Stewart, a founder of Gendered Intelligence, says: ‘We are on the cusp of a gender revolution.’

Judging by developments in the wider world as well, that does not seem an outlandish claim.

A different lens

A snapshot of recent global news through a trans lens would show:

Tamara Adrian, a Venezuelan woman, presenting herself as the first ever trans candidate for her country’s Congress. Nepal issuing its first ‘Third Gender’ passport. AJ Kearns, an Australian trans man, taking a break in his hormone treatment and giving birth to a baby daughter.

And one rolling story you just can’t get away from – Cait. Caitlin Jenner, former Olympic athlete, whose transitioning is followed like an addiction, her own TV show – *I am Cait* – provoking a social media snowstorm.

But another item, also from the US, brings a different reality into focus. It’s about Tamara Dominguez, a Kansas trans woman who was seen getting out of a black SUV, which then ran her over, reversed, and ran over her again – making her the 17th trans person to be murdered in the US this year.

All the data on trans people and their lives is relatively new and patchy. But what is available paints a shocking picture. Life expectancies that are half the national average in some countries of Latin America; unemployment and poverty rates that are way higher; public health services routinely denying trans people even basic medical care (see ‘The Facts’ page 20).

Since 2009 the Trans Murder Monitoring project has been collecting international data. As the numbers have risen, the age of victims has declined. In 2014 the youngest was an eight-year-old trans girl in Rio de Janeiro, beaten to death by her father.¹

The global suicide rates of trans people are reckoned to be 50 times higher than the average.

When I ask Jay Stewart to identify the major issue facing the young people he is working

with in Britain, he says: ‘Mental health. Some of our people are super shy and lack confidence. They have bad experiences with other young people who do not allow for gender variance.’

Out of the shadows

At the same time, visibility is greater than ever. ‘Trans women, trans men, and non-binary trans people are suddenly everywhere, claiming our rights and claiming public spaces; even getting to play ourselves in television drama,’ says veteran British activist and writer Roz Kaveney.²

Gone are the days when people who wanted to transition believed medical experts who said that to do so successfully required cutting themselves off entirely from their former lives – family, friends, home, job – and starting afresh, alone.

The internet has played a vital role in connecting trans people, supplementing the work of underfunded self-help groups. The meaning of what it is to be trans has expanded, along with strategies for dealing with ignorance, transphobia and their impacts.

Who is trans?

Transgender or *trans* are umbrella terms that can include many different identities. More recently *Trans** (read as trans-star) and *TGNC* (trans and gender non-conforming) are used.

Trans can include a wide range of gender-variant people: some identify as *MtF* (male to female) or *FtM* (female to male), and/or transsexual (often associated with gender reassignment surgery), and/or as crossdressers, drag kings and queens. Younger trans people may describe themselves as trans guys/boys or trans girls.

People who identify as *genderqueer* may resist the gender binary in numerous ways. The distinction between various trans people is not so much whether they have had certain kinds of body modifications but how they identify.

Intersex refers to people whose physical sex does not fit neatly into what we expect of male and female bodies. Some intersex people identify as trans, others do not.

Cisgender refers to people whose sex and gender identity match (The Latin word *cis* means same side, trans, opposite side).

Source: Laura Erickson-Schroth (ed), *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, Oxford University Press, 2014.

Nevertheless, trans people everywhere are still excluded and marginalized because of the way they express their gender identity. In much of Africa and the Middle East transgender is synonymous with homosexuality, which is a criminal offence, punishable by imprisonment and, in some countries, death.

Social rejection can be intense. Transgender people are often publicly humiliated, stripped, harassed by the police and thrown out of their homes.

‘A transgender person should be a prostitute, should be used for sodomy – that is the general narrative,’ says Audrey Mbugua, a Kenyan

Katy Migiro/Reuters



Audrey Mbugua, Kenya's brave and incisive transgender campaigner.

activist and suicide survivor. Today she has become, in her own words, 'a trans warrior', setting up the Trans Education and Advocacy NGO. She is battling the Kenyan authorities to get her name on official documents changed and to obtain gender reassignment surgery, which is not allowed in her country although there are medical staff willing to perform it.³

International campaigning focuses heavily on legal gender recognition and citizen rights. Having official documents that reflect one's gender expression is no trivial matter; it's essential for navigating daily life – work, school, hospitals, police, travel – safely, without harassment and humiliation.

A flurry of gender recognition laws have come on to the statute books in Europe, North America and Australasia. In many cases, though, the laws have conditions and restrictions that actually violate the human rights of transgender people.

More than 20 countries in Europe (including France, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Finland, Ukraine and Russia) insist on the surgical removal of reproductive organs and sterilization before new documents can be issued.⁴ In Canada this requirement has been lifted following legal challenges.

Forced or coerced sterilization is a violation of the UN Convention Against Torture, and the Special Rapporteur on Torture has called on all states to outlaw using it against their trans and intersex citizens. Another condition imposed by several European countries is that people seeking gender reassignment must be single or divorced. Some states insist they must be childless, too.⁵

Trans people face higher levels of violence, joblessness and poverty

5,000 ways of being

Such restrictions show a fundamental lack of understanding not only of the diversity and complexity of transgender experience but of gender itself (see page 13 'Who is trans?').

US trans activist Jennifer Finney Boylan says: 'If I've met over 5,000 trans people, I've probably heard 5,000 different explanations of what it means to be trans, and what our defining experiences are.'⁶

Some feel from an early age that they have been born 'into the wrong body' and only medical intervention – hormone treatment, surgery – will make life liveable. British writer Juliet Jacques describes it as 'an overbearing visceral sense that I could not survive in a male body'.

For others, it's a gradual process, recognizing only in adulthood the source of their distress or 'dysphoria'.

Some go through gender reassignment treatment and assume a new identity in 'stealth' as they aim to mesh as seamlessly as possible with society post-transition. They may not even identify as 'trans'.

For others, 'coming out' as transgender is a personal and political liberation enabling them to express themselves anywhere along the spectrum of gender.

And many more don't fit any of the above descriptions.

Lawmakers who impose inhumane conditions on gender recognition – such as having to go through unwanted surgery or divorce – appear determined to uphold binary gender conventions as far as possible; gender variance is something to be corrected not respected.

Activists in Manila protest against the murder of Filipina trans woman Jennifer Laude. US marine Joseph Scott Pemberton, who strangled her, claimed 'trans panic' in his defence.



Romeo Ranoco/Reuters

But different people will need and want different kinds and levels of medical intervention, or none at all. And you cannot make any assumption about people's sexuality or the nature of their family bonds, before or after transition. In fact, many couples who married pre-reassignment, given the choice, end up staying together after.

Argentinean legislators took a different approach. They didn't just consult with transgender groups, they took on board and incorporated all their key ideas, recalls activist Lohana Berkins. The result: the world's most progressive legislation, which has helped shape legislation in Ireland and Denmark since.

Argentina's 2012 Gender Law was the first to allow people to self-define their gender without the need for medical 'verification'. All documents – including birth certificates – can be reissued. Even children can self-define and this must be respected by official institutions, including schools. The 2012 law also entitles access to state healthcare for age-appropriate reassignment treatment; and it provides protection from discrimination. One result of the law, observed by Berkins, has been that trans youth today are confident about expressing their identity in diverse ways and less inclined towards medical intervention than the older generation was.

For people who are born intersex, self-definition without medical intervention is even more critical. While many trans people struggle to obtain (and afford) treatment, for intersex children and teenagers the issue is how to prevent medically unnecessary 'corrective' surgery to make them conform to binary male or female norms before they are old enough to decide for themselves.

In 'License to be Yourself', an Open Society Foundation report, New Zealand trans activist Jack Byrne outlines key features for progressive laws and policies. They will: Be based on self-defined gender identity rather than verification by others; include more than two sex/gender options for those who identify outside the binary characters of male and female; include intersex people; apply to all residents, including those born overseas; link to broader human rights, particularly access to health services that enable someone to medically transition if that is their choice.

Equally important is what they will *not* require: A medical diagnosis of gender identity disorder, gender dysphoria, or transsexualism; transition-related medical treatment, such as hormonal therapy or gender affirming surgeries; sterilization, either explicitly or by requiring medical procedures that result in it; living continuously or permanently in one's gender identity; divorce or dissolution of civil partnership. Nor will they prohibit parenting now or the intention to have children in the future.⁵

Setting language free

In English it is common to substitute a gender pronoun (such as *he* or *she*) instead of repeating someone's name. But not all languages do this. Chinese, Finnish, Hungarian, Turkish, Farsi, Yoruba, Malay, Tagalog and Basque are among the many that do not have gender pronouns.

In English some gender-neutral pronouns have been invented, such as *zhe* or *ze* (pronounced 'zee') to replace *s/he*, or *hir* (pronounced 'here') for him/her. Gender neutral titles include *Mx* ('mix') or *Misc* ('misk') or *Mre* (pronounced 'mystery'). Alternatively, people may opt for *they* or *them* in the singular as well as the plural. The official dictionary of the Swedish language recently introduced a gender-neutral pronoun: *hen*. Germany, too, is gradually moving away from highly gendered language.

The words used to describe trans people have changed. So 'tranny' and 'transvestite' are now considered pejorative in some countries and contexts. Trans or transgender person (but not 'a transgender'); and crossdresser and/or drag king/queen, respectively, are considered more respectful. 'Hermaphrodite' is another old term to be avoided when referring to people who are intersex.

Sources : Wikipedia nin.tl/genderless-languages

The Guardian nin.tl/Swedens-new-pronoun

The Guardian nin.tl/Germans-get-less-gendered

Laura Erickson Schroth (ed), *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, Oxford University Press, 2014.

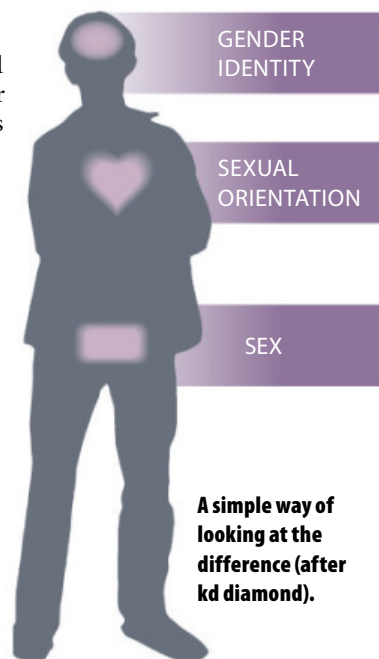
Variant South

Trans communities everywhere face higher rates of unemployment, underemployment and poverty, but in the Global South this is made worse because trans people have limited access to education and many are rejected by biological families that would have otherwise provided an economic safety net. In Uganda, activists report that many intersex babies are killed soon after birth, while others are hidden out of shame and fear.⁷

Getting gender reassignment treatment is a complex and often costly process – even in rich countries. For trans people in the South it's often just impossible – partly for economic reasons, but also due to the prejudice they face in healthcare settings. This has a serious effect on body image and self worth which is expressed in higher suicide rates. In Peru and Bolivia trans women prefer to treat themselves and organize silicone-injecting parties – a practice that can be deadly when industrial silicone is used.

However, in recent times there has been an explosion of trans and intersex activism in the Global South, too.⁷

In April 2014 gender-variant *bijras* celebrated a historic victory when the Indian Supreme Court recognized their status as a 'Third Gender' and directed the government to provide them with medical and other facilities. The court also said there should be 'reservations' for education and public employment. But to date the government appears to be



Faizan Fiaz



Jay Stewart, co-founder of Gendered Intelligence: 'Gender is not what you are, but what you do.'

stalling and has yet to deliver rights to the three million-strong community.

Along with *kathoey*s (or ladyboys) in Thailand and the *fa'afafine* in Samoa, the hijras of the Indian subcontinent have been cited as proof of cultural acceptance in non-Western cultures. But although they are a visible and sometimes noisy part of the culture, the vast majority survive on the margins of society, eking a living through sex work and begging. A few hijra individuals have, however, broken into mainstream politics and the media, including Madhu Bai Kinnar, who became India's first hijra mayor earlier this year.

Beyond the binary

Trans and gender-variant people present a challenge and an opportunity for deepening equality and enlarging citizenship rights for us all. Often they strike at the root of a concept that sustains a much wider oppression: the tyranny of the binary. This tyranny serves many purposes – above all the maintenance of patriarchy. Male domination depends upon a constantly reinforced belief in the innate difference between women and men – and therefore their rights, roles and privileges. To the patriarchal mindset, the notion that gender might be more fluid, might not be a fact of nature but socially constructed, is as undesirable as it is inconceivable.

Capitalism too profits from such thinking – whether in terms of lower-paid jobs for women and the billions worth of unpaid female domestic labour performed each year, or the ever-expanding markets for products with 'his' and 'hers' versions. Childhood is captured by marketing 'girl' or 'boy' toys, clothes, colours, activities, drumming the anxious dogma of

fixed gender identity and division into the minds of children right from infancy.

In fighting for their rights, trans and gender-variant people face resistance from several quarters: from traditionalists determined to obstruct or punish all who deviate from established norms; from sceptical gender conformists, clinging to a fixed idea of male and female as though their lives (and those of their children) depended on it; and even from essentialist radical feminists, wishing to exclude trans women from women's spaces.

What's needed is an opening of minds, to let in what may seem like a big conceptual shift but actually is not that scary at all. The idea that sexuality is on a spectrum is pretty much accepted now. What gender-variant people demonstrate is that so is gender. Why turn away from a rainbow and insist on seeing the world only in black and white? As Jay Stewart says, 'gender is not what you are, but what you do'.

Once we let go of the fixity of the binary, life can actually be simpler and fairer. There is no need for different rights and laws for different categories of people. Persons can marry; persons can parent; persons can travel. You don't have to specify gender as a qualification any more than you have to specify eye colour. And those of us who do not neatly fit the M box or the F box – or do not want to – can breathe more easily.

Times are changing and some of the smaller players on the world stage are leading the way.

New Zealand/Aotearoa, having defined marriage simply as the union between two people, regardless of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, is now allowing all citizens to have X-gendered passports if they please.

Jay Stewart reports that a third of the young people he works with identify as neither male nor female but 'something else'. He adds: 'I think non-binary is the way forward. It's going to be more prevalent. Legislation will need to change so that non-binary people can live and thrive and be equally validated as citizens.'

Finally, an anecdote, from Jennifer Finley Boylan. She recalls how, early on in her transition, she passed a woman and her young daughter while exiting a shop. She overheard the little girl, who had been staring at her, asking her mother: 'What was *that*?'

'That, honey,' the mother replied, 'was a human being.' ■

¹ Transrespect vs Transphobia, nin.tl/trans-murder-2015

² Stonewall, *Friends Magazine*, 'Stonewall and Trans',

Summer 2015. ³ Voices of Africa, 'Kenya's transgender

warrior', 10 April 2015, nin.tl/transgender-warrior ⁴ TGEU,

Trans Rights Europe Index 2015 nin.tl/trans-rights-in-europe

⁵ Open Society Foundations, 'License to be Yourself', 2014

nin.tl/trans-license-report ⁶ Laura Erickson-Schroth (ed), *Trans*

Bodies, Trans Selves, Oxford University Press, 2014. ⁷ GATE/

American Jewish World Service, 'The state of trans and intersex organizing', 2014 nin.tl/trans-intersex-activism

Anindito Mukherjee/Reuters

Hijras in Delhi celebrate the Indian Supreme Court's recognition of the marginalized transgender community as 'Third Gender'.



Seriously easy things to do... to support trans people



Small things, as suggested by CN LESTER. But if every cis – or ‘not trans’ – person followed them, we’d be living in a kinder world.

1 DO EXAMINE THE LANGUAGE YOU USE

Much of the language associated with trans people in the media we, as trans people, find actively hurtful. This is not about anyone’s ‘right to offend’, but has to do with talking about each other in accurate, compassionate terms. ‘She/he’, ‘shemale’, ‘tranny’ and the like, are out. ‘It’ is just cruel. ‘Sex change’ really doesn’t describe the transitioning process. The language we use about trans people frames the way we treat trans people in our societies. So, if you want trans people to be treated fairly and equally, start with the words you use.

2 DO EXAMINE THE ASSUMPTIONS YOU MAKE

You so often can’t tell by looking – what our pronouns are, what our histories are, how we describe ourselves – so don’t try. Making assumptions is generally a rubbish way of interacting with other humans.

3 DO PUT OUR SAFETY FIRST

Whether someone is ‘out’ as trans (or has a trans history) or not can be a matter of life and death. You don’t have a right to make that call. If this sounds like hyperbole, search: ‘trans panic defence’. This is a defence used by lawyers acting for killers of trans people to excuse the perpetrators’ ‘loss of control’ and ‘excessive violence’, in order to get crimes downgraded from murder to manslaughter.

4 DON’T THINK THAT OUR MEDICAL HISTORIES ARE YOURS TO QUESTION AND DISCUSS

A trans person’s veracity does not rely on what they may or may not have done with their bodies. If there’s a genuine reason why you need to know our medical histories and medical plans then we’ll tell you. And no – idle curiosity as to the contents of our underwear is not a genuine reason.

5 DON’T ASSUME THAT YOU’LL KNOW HOW WE’D REACT

It’s not helpful when a cis man tells a trans man ‘but I’d LOVE to have boobs’. And if you start playing Devil’s Advocate, don’t expect us to want to play along.

6 DON’T ASSUME WE NEED TO BE ‘SCHOOLED’ IN OUR GENDERS

You are not the authentic version that we copy – we don’t need lessons on how to be ‘real’ men or ‘real’ women or ‘real’ anything. If you’d like to pay someone a compliment, do it for the right reasons – not because you think that you have the right to ‘affirm’ someone else’s gender.

7 DO LEARN YOUR FACTS AND SPREAD THEM AROUND

Don’t let ignorance be your shield – educate yourself about the risks and discrimination faced by trans people – the violence, homelessness, unemployment, suicides, forced sterilizations (see *The Facts* page 20). Then educate those around you. Don’t act like we’re a taboo, shameful subject. Raise trans issues; share articles on social media; recommend writers that you like; email your local and national politicians. Don’t just shake your head at how awful something is and do nothing.

8 DO STAND UP FOR US

Don’t just be supportive to our faces – real support means standing up for us when we’re unable to defend ourselves.

9 DO SUPPORT TRANS CHARITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

There’s precious little money around at the moment, but if you have any going spare, do please consider donating to a trans organization. Every donation matters. Trans groups and charities often operate on a shoestring budget, achieving incredible things with very little in the way of financial support. Think how much we could achieve with just a little more help (see *Action* on page 29).

Where the children lead

MARTI ABERNATHEY picks a way through the panic, confusion and maltreatment that surrounds transgender children.

‘At age three my child, who I understood to be a boy, began expressing a preference for all things girly,’ recalls Catherine, mother of 16-year-old Becca.

‘We were hoping this was a phase and something we could influence. So we sought treatment and were told we could “encourage boy play” and “discourage girl play”.’

Catherine followed that advice but by age six Billy was threatening suicide.

‘So we went back to treatment; we were horrified that our child was so unhappy. We were told Billy was depressed and anxious, but gender identity was never discussed.’

Now she reckons: ‘What we did to Billy as a young boy was the equivalent of reparative [or ‘conversion’] therapy and it was disastrous. Our child went to a very dark place.’

There were ‘suicide attempts, cutting, self-medicating until we figured out what this was’.

When Billy was 15, her parents allowed her to transition to Becca.

‘Since then, slowly, we have been rebuilding our family cohesion and Becca’s self esteem, now that we have finally accepted our child for who she is.’

Children like Becca are said to suffer from ‘gender dysphoria’ – which is defined by the American Psychiatric Association in the following way:

‘For a person to be diagnosed with gender dysphoria, there must be a marked difference between the individual’s expressed/ experienced gender and the gender others would assign him or her, and it must continue for at least six months. In children, the desire to be of the other gender must be present



Cole, one of the children featured in Louis Theroux’s BBC2 documentary *Transgender Kids*.

and verbalized. This condition causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.’

The media glare

Trans children are increasingly in the media spotlight. But there remains much confusion, misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Often transgender and gender nonconformity are conflated.

Kelley Winters, author of *Gender Madness in American Psychiatry*, comments: ‘Lots of kids are gender nonconforming, and the great majority are not distressed by their bodies or birth assignments. Only a small portion of gender nonconforming kids are gender dysphoric, and consistently, persistently and insistently express distress with their birth assignments or physical characteristics.’

Sometimes articles about pre-pubescent trans children refer to gender reassignment surgery or cross-gender hormone therapy, as though these were appropriate treatments for trans children.

Professor Dan Karasic at the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California San Francisco, a world-leading institute for transgender research, explains: ‘No medical intervention is done before puberty.’

He adds: ‘Those whose desire to live in another gender persists into puberty may be put on blockers, which allows for time for confirmation of this identity, while also being reversible. Dutch studies have shown that using this protocol of puberty blockers; hormones later in adolescence; and then surgery for those that are transgender, results in well-adjusted trans adults.’

So treatment for young people with gender dysphoria looks like this:

- prepubescent children – therapy for self-acceptance
- pubescent children – hormone blockers to delay puberty
- young adults – cross-sex hormone therapy.

Another charge that is levelled against parents and therapists who take seriously or try to help trans children is that they are in some way experimenting on them.

This view was expressed by Brendan O'Neill writing in the *The Spectator* earlier this year. His piece was entitled: 'Trans activists are effectively experimenting on children. Could there be anything more cruel?'¹

O'Neill was reacting to a generally sensitive BBC documentary by Louis Theroux on trans kids in the US.

The film, O'Neill fulminated, 'introduced us to Camille, a five-year-old, pink-loving, Gaga-admiring boy who daftly thinks he is a girl, and even more daftly is indulged by psychologists and his parents...'

He went on: 'The treatment of nonconforming or plain funny kids as "transgender" strikes me as a stunning abdication of adult responsibility. It is the job of adults to correct childish confusions, to guide kids through weird or rough patches... But now, the cult of relativism runs so deep that adults even balk from making that most basic of all judgements – that a child with a penis is a boy and a child with a vagina is a girl – and instead we accommodate to the child's own fads and silliness.'

Happy, bright, laughing...

The suggestion, made by some critics of therapy, that parents are somehow imposing trans identities on their children strikes Camille, mother of a seven-year-old transgender daughter, as 'strange'.

'No parent would choose this for their child. It is a struggle your child has to deal with on a daily basis and on so many levels. It's not like they change their name and put on a skirt or a pair of Star Wars pyjamas and bam! Life is sunshine!'

Camille says she knows that the road ahead for her daughter may be difficult. 'Puberty blockers, starting hormones, infertility, who to trust, who to love, depression rates, suicide rates, violence, bigotry, misunderstanding, fear, surgery. Who would choose this for their child? This just shows a complete lack of understanding of the condition...'

Evidence shows that children who are criticized, demonized or shamed with regard to their gender non-conformity are far more likely to suffer increased rates of depression and anxiety.

Conversely, a recent study published in *Pediatrics*, the official journal of the Academy of American Pediatrics, shows that once gender dysphoria has been resolved, the transgender child's wellbeing is comparable with that of gender conforming children their own age.²

Dawn, mother of a 16-year-old trans girl, confirms this. 'At first we did nothing. Pretended it was a phase and she would move on to the next thing.' But her daughter continued to struggle. The parents put the girl into therapy with a professional who was 'slightly familiar with the issue' and things began to get better. Then she saw another therapist 'who specializes in working with transgender clients, [and] really helped her understand who she was'.

Dawn adds: 'All I know is that my child went from being sad, depressed and reclusive to the happy, bright and laughing woman I see today.'

There are three possible options for parents of gender nonconforming children:

- gender conversion/reparative therapy
- gender therapy
- do nothing.

Many now view gender conversion or reparative therapy as unethical. But it still has its proponents, notably Kenneth Zucker and Susan Bradley, who wrote *Gender Identity Disorder and Psychosexual Problems in Children and Adolescents* in 1995.

Since the suicide of Leelah Alcorn, a US trans teen – and transgender reparative therapy patient – in December 2014, there have been mounting calls to outlaw trans reparative therapy.

Valerie Jarrett, a senior adviser to President Barack Obama, said: 'The overwhelming scientific evidence demonstrates that conversion therapy, especially when it is practised on young people, is neither medically nor ethically appropriate and can cause substantial harm.'

She continued: 'As part of our dedication to protecting America's youth, this administration supports efforts to ban the use of conversion therapy for minors.'

The best chance of success and health for a trans child is gender therapy. Shaming or ignoring the problem is not only damaging but in some cases life-threatening.

If the end result we're searching for is happy, well-adjusted adults, then shouldn't we follow where the children (and the science) lead us? ■

Marti Abernathey is a US trans activist, political strategist and media pioneer. She writes and edits blogs for transadvocate.com

¹ Brendan O'Neill, *The Spectator*, 8 April 2015; nln.tl/child-experiment-claim ² Annelou de Vries et al, 'Young Adult Psychological Outcome After Puberty Suppression and Gender Reassignment', *Pediatrics*, 8 September 2014; nln.tl/Dutch-study

Transgender -

1 How many?

Methods of estimating the number of trans people in the world all have their flaws. The trans spectrum is diverse and includes some who do not self-identify as trans.

Best estimates currently available suggest:



Historically, estimates stated many more trans women (MtF) than men (FtM). Experts now reckon the numbers are roughly equal.⁴

Intersex: 1 in every 1,500 – 2,000 people are born intersex.⁵

2 Violence and discrimination



In 2013, **72%** of anti-LGBT homicide victims in the US were transgender women, with 'women of colour' most affected.⁶

Worldwide **1,731** killings of trans and gender-diverse people were reported between 2008-14; **131** were under 20; **48** were children.⁷

Brazil (**689**), Mexico (**194**) and the US (**108**) have the highest absolute numbers – **57%** of all reported cases.⁷



44%-70% of transgender women and girls in Latin America have felt forced to leave home or were thrown out.⁸

In a New York City study, **71%** of trans boys reported verbal and **17%** physical abuse. **87%** of trans girls reported verbal, **36%** physical and **16%** sexual abuse.⁸

40% of Filipino transgender women and **21%** of Thai transgender women reported paternal rejection when transitioning.⁸

More than **300** hate crimes were perpetrated against trans people in England and Wales between 2011-12.²

Around **50%** of victims of transphobic hate crime in the EU did not report it to the police due to mistrust.⁹

In Canada, **25%** of trans people in Ontario say they have been harassed by police.¹⁰



3 Health, education, work

Transphobia and prejudice have many impacts:

Globally the suicide rate is 16 per 100,000 people. For transgender adults it is around **800** per 100,000.^{11,12}

Young people in Britain who report having attempted suicide¹³

6% of all 16-26 year olds

48% of trans 16-26 year olds



People in the US who report having attempted suicide⁸

5% of general population

10-20% of LGB

41% of trans women

46% of trans men

In the US, lifetime prevalence of depression among trans people is over **50%** compared with **9%** overall.¹

In Canada **87%** of trans students feel unsafe at school.¹⁴



78% in the European Union say they could never be open about being trans in secondary school.⁹

60% of trans women and **43%** of trans men have felt discriminated against when looking for a job in the EU.⁹

Trans people in the US are twice as likely to be unemployed.⁸ **90%** report experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination at work.⁷

In Ontario, Canada, only **37%** of trans respondents were in full-time employment.¹⁴

In the US, trans people are **4x** as likely to live in poverty.⁶



THE FACTS

For many trans people, sex work is the main employment option:

In El Salvador, close to **47%** of trans women reported that their main income comes from selling sex.⁸

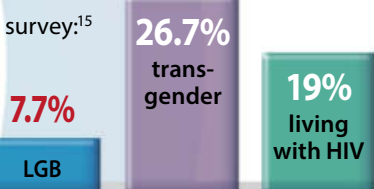
Globally, the chance of acquiring HIV is **49** times higher for transgender women than all adults of reproductive age.⁸

61% of countries report that their national AIDS strategies do not address transgender people.⁸

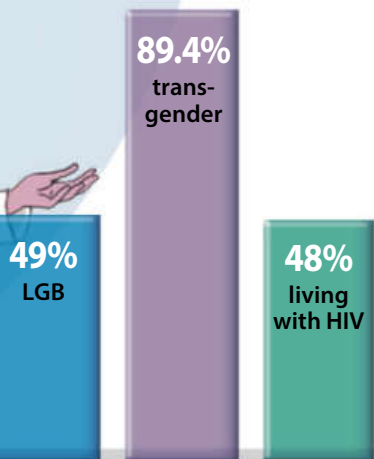
Access to healthcare

Respondents told a US survey:¹⁵

I was refused healthcare because I am...



Not enough health professionals are adequately trained to care for people who are...



Argentina's 2012 Gender Identity Law guarantees access to trans-related healthcare, with costs covered in the national mandatory medical plan.

4 The law

Most states discriminate against trans people in fundamental ways. But activists have won important legal changes in some countries.



Trans people's existence and gender change is *de facto* illegal in at least **60** of the 116 countries for which there is information. This applies to most countries in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.¹⁶

35 countries in Europe now have legal provisions to recognize a trans person's gender identity.⁹

14 European countries still do not.⁹



20 countries in Europe still require by law that trans people undergo sterilization before their gender identity is recognized.¹⁷



Most countries require a medical/pathological intervention (ranging from diagnosis of mental disorder to surgery) prior to legal gender recognition.¹⁷

Many countries force married trans people to divorce as a condition of gender recognition. They include Finland, Russia, Turkey, France.¹⁷



In Argentina, Denmark, Malta and Ireland, trans people can now self-declare their gender in legal documents without medical intervention.^{18, 19}

A growing number of countries allow trans people to remain married. They include New Zealand/Aotearoa, Australia (in process), Canada, numerous US states, Britain (though England has controversial spousal 'consent' requirement), and around 15 other EU countries.²⁰



New Zealand/Aotearoa, Australia, India, Nepal and Germany offer more than male and female as official gender markers.



¹ Laura Erickson-Schroth (ed), *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, Oxford University Press, 2014. ² Amnesty International, 'The State Decides Who I Am', 2014, nin.tl/AI-trans-report ³ The Williams Institute, G Gates, 'How many people are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender nin.tl/how-many-people-LGBT ⁴ Colt Keo-Meier, 'How common is trans identity?' in *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves*, edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth, Oxford University Press, 2014. ⁵ Intersex Society of North America, isna.org ⁶ National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 'Injustice at Every Turn', 2011, nin.tl/trans-inequality-report ⁷ TGEU, Trans Murder Monitoring 2015 update, nin.tl/trans-murder ⁸ UNAIDS, 'The Gap Report 2014: Transgender People', nin.tl/unaid-trans ⁹ FRA – European Union agency for Fundamental Rights, nin.tl/eu-lgbt-survey ¹⁰ TransPulse Project transpulseproject.ca ¹¹ Suicide.org, International Suicide Statistics, nin.tl/suicide-rates-world ¹² Speaking of Suicide nin.tl/trans-suicide ¹³ PACE quoted in nin.tl/young-trans-suicide ¹⁴ Ontario Human Rights Commission quoting www.transpulseproject.ca ¹⁵ Lambda Legal, 'When Health Care Isn't Caring: Lambda Legal's Survey of Discrimination Against LGBT People and People Living with HIV', New York, 2010. nin.tl/Lambda-health ¹⁶ TGEU, Legal-Social Mapping ¹⁷ TGEU, Forced Sterilization in the EU 2014, nin.tl/trans-rights-europe ¹⁸ Huffington Post, 2015/06/08 nin.tl/trans-identity-law ¹⁹ Pink News, 2015/07/15 nin.tl/ireland-passed-gender-bill ²⁰ Open Society Foundations, 'License to be yourself: Marriage and forced divorce', nin.tl/forced-divorce

Staying alive

Visibility offers no protection for trans people in Brazil. AMANDA PALHA analyses the roots of violence and exclusion faced by her community – and its fight to stay alive.

One morning, earlier this year, Brazil awoke to see its social networks flooded with images of a naked, cropped, disfigured, handcuffed black *travesti** (or trans woman) in police custody.

In one of the photographs she was sitting on the ground in front of a police car, her breasts exposed and her face unrecognizable. In the second picture, she was lying face-down on the floor with her pants ripped, surrounded by police officers. Her name was Verônica Bolina and the details that might explain those two images surfaced slowly throughout the day, with all the sensationalism and disrespect the mainstream media usually affords us.

We were told she had been arrested for assaulting an elderly woman who was her neighbour. We were informed she bit off a part of a prison guard's ear shortly after she arrived at the police station. We learned she was now facing two charges of attempted murder: against her neighbour, who was by now in hospital, and against the prison guard.

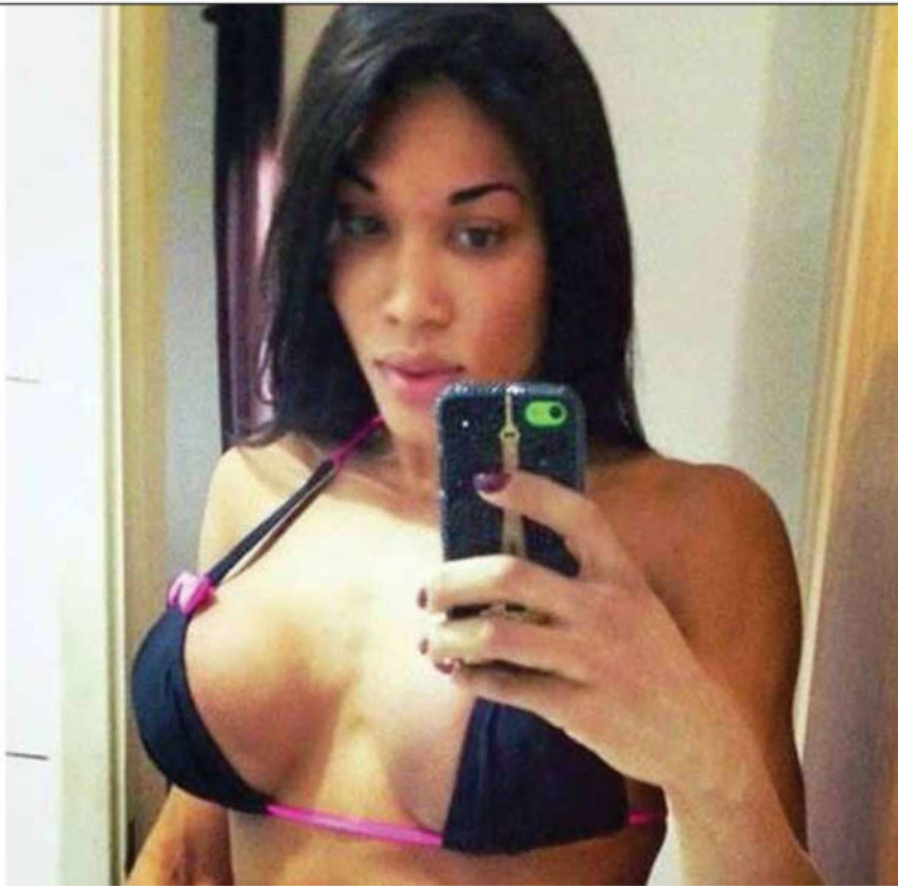
Activists succeeded in getting Verônica out of the police station and into a temporary detention centre where she could at last speak alone to her lawyer. That meeting confirmed that Verônica had been tortured, beaten, photographed and stripped while in custody. She had been humiliated and forced to confess to attempted murder and to lie about the violence inflicted on her by the police.

But by now, to the outside world, Verônica was no longer Verônica but 'Tranny Tyson' – an example of 'how violent these people can be'.

And Verônica could be anything because, to all concerned, she was not a human being. Because, to all concerned, none of us is.

Born a person

Verônica, like all of us, was conceived and born into this world, naked, a person.



What is the social machinery that led that baby all the way to those pictures next to the police car? Where does this extreme 'abjection' (or unbelonging) come from?

To understand the roots of abnormality we need to understand normality, and the first step in that direction is to deconstruct it. That a norm exists is a fact: women have vaginas, men have penises. Men and women, however, are not mere biological data but social categories. They are understood through the ideological ensemble that governs their social relations.

The norm says that bodies with a vagina will occupy one established social position and will be socialized to that end; bodies with a penis will be men and everything in our society will work to assure that: the colour used to paint the bedroom wall; the baby's clothes; the toys – cups and pans for her, action figures for him; the advice – 'sit with your legs closed' for her, and 'do not take shit from anyone' for him.

There is a noticeable hierarchical character in those constructions as well: men must be strong, dominant and public; women must be fragile, dominated and domestic. Men have penises and must feel attracted to women with vaginas; women have vaginas and must have relationships with men with penises.

The rule is as clear as it is artificial. And, as happens to all artificial things, reality is quick to unmask it. We are not inert pieces of playdough, being passively moulded according to such determinations. Diversity itself contradicts such determinist thinking.

Suddenly and relentlessly a baby with a

This is transphobia: Verônica Bolina (left) as she was before being taken into police custody – and (right) after.

The first exclusion happens inside our own home

* *travesti* is a term commonly used in Latin America to describe trans women. It has been suggested that the *travesti* community constitutes a separate cultural and gender category.



vagina grows up to be a man, while another with a penis grows up to be a woman, even if that was not the initial intention. The norm has been broken, betrayed! Its artificiality denounced and its guts are now exposed! And that, my dearests, is unforgivable.

How we are made vulnerable

Even if it takes us a while to rationalize the proportions of such rupture, we feel it early on. The contradiction between how we understand ourselves and how we are seen by the rest of the world generates – for trans people especially – a cruel and painful feeling of disconnection from reality. That disconnect will affect our relationships with our own bodies. The mirror becomes our worst enemy, the one that reminds us every day that we don't belong to ourselves. That we do not fit inside ourselves. That we do not exist. This feeling of non-existence, as cruel as it is inevitable, only gets worse with time and with the deepening of our social relationships. Puberty, a highly anticipated phase for most kids, runs us over like a tractor. That body fits us less each day and each day we are more certain that this world is not our place.

Our families are usually the first place where such impressions are confirmed. As the smallest core of our social organization, the family also concentrates the synthesis and perpetuation of norms. As we grow up we fail, one by one, our families' expectations. Every day we belong less; psychological and physical violence become frighteningly common. So, the first exclusion happens inside our own home.

School, another place where norms are strongly maintained, is no less hostile. Talk about trans people 'abandoning' education is far from the truth. In reality, we are kicked out of school by psychological, physical and institutionalized violence, by hostile interactions that constantly tell us we do not belong there either.

A childhood and an adolescence marked by exclusion and rejection inevitably lead to more violence and marginalization.

Transgender Europe's Trans Murder Monitoring project points out that 65 per cent of trans people murdered in the year leading up to May 2015, whose occupations were known, were sex workers.

The Brazilian Association of Travestis and Transexuals – ANTRA – estimates that more than 90 per cent of trans women in Brazil work in prostitution. Is it reasonable to believe that such a large proportion of one demographic should, of their own free will, choose the same profession – a marginalized, criminalized activity, often synonymous with violence and abuse?

The truth is that society teaches us, throughout our lives, that we do not belong anywhere, while necessity shows us that there is a place where we can exist: the streets.

It is an objective fact that the doors of the labour market are mainly closed to us. It is a material reality that social barriers keep us from universities and from any job considered 'normal' because we are not normal.

But it is also a subjective reality, because when we are alone and vulnerable the best place to be is with others of our group, and they too do not belong anywhere but the street. For trans women, there is prostitution; for trans men, the drug trade. For all of us, always the gutter and the margins.

Kicked out of home, of school, of jobs considered 'respectable', we end up kicked out of public life itself! Public spaces are denied us, and so is daylight.

Dehumanized, we are susceptible to all kinds of violence and abuse – whether perpetrated by ordinary members of society or by agents of the state.

According to Forge-Forward, a US-based support organization for the trans community, 50 per cent of trans individuals in the US have experienced sexual violence at least once, and seven per cent of such episodes take place at the hands of police.

A sense of purpose

If the international community was shocked to learn about Verônica's case, to us, Brazilian trans people, there was no surprise. The difference was that her case made public what we are used to seeing and living every day. If Brazil is today the number one country in the

Society teaches us, throughout our lives, that we do not belong anywhere, while necessity shows us that there is a place where we can exist: the streets



of trans people murdered between May 2014-15, whose occupations were known, were sex workers.

Photo: El Diario Montañes



Transwomen taking part in São Paulo city's new Transcidadania project, aimed at helping trans people resume their education and get a job.

sad ranking of murders of trans people, the United States, dubbed a 'first world country', comes third, right after Mexico. If in Brazil, according to ANTRA, our life expectancy is 35, according to Transgender Europe (TGEU) 73 per cent of us worldwide will die before our 40th birthday.

Society may mask its workings with a fake discourse of equality and progress, but the truth is that social vulnerability, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of trans persons is a problem worldwide that is still far from being resolved.

That's exactly why we resist collectively! Activist groups emerge as opportunities for socialization and support. Activism for our very existence – such a basic and universal demand – brings a new sense of purpose for those of us

who up to now only had reasons to quit living. Solidarity, learned in our struggle to survive, has become our biggest combat weapon.

However slowly, trans community advocacy and support groups are multiplying around the world and starting to gain ground. Argentina's progressive 2012 Gender Law has inspired a similar law currently before the Brazilian Congress.

This year São Paulo's municipal administration inaugurated a programme offering scholarships and professional training to encourage marginalized trans people to resume their education and to find a job.

These examples present society with a new and different view of us: the unthinkable and revolutionary idea that we are persons.

Idealists say 'we are all human beings'. Verônica, however, did not go through such a violent episode because she was a human being: it happened because she is a travesti. And if she is alive today, it is because she is not alone.

It was because we were together and organized that we were able to offer support, mobilize and demand justice from the state. Together and organized we can get laws passed, get support programmes and be recognized in our humanity. It is together and organized, with oppressed people uniting and resisting, that we will show the world the meaning of equality. ■

Amanda Palha writes for *Revista Geni*, an independent online collective of journalists, academics, artists and militants fighting for equality and difference.

Translated by **Carolina de Assis**.

'Go change your gender!'

On the face of it, Iran has an unusually progressive and positive approach towards transgender. Since Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa in the 1980s allowing gender reassignment surgery, treatment has been readily available. The process is quick, with loans granted for surgery. Legal documents are reissued. In 2010 some 370 Iranians went through with transition and surgery, according to a pro-government news agency.

But there is a darker side. For gender reassignment is also seen as a 'solution' for homosexuality. Being gay is not only illegal in Iran, it carries the death penalty.

So people who are actually lesbian or gay may feel forced to transition.

Soheil, a gay 21-year-old, was visited by two male relatives who told him: 'You need to change your gender or we will kill you.' He managed to escape and now lives in Turkey.



Unusually, it's safer to be trans than gay in Iran.

Donna, who grew up in Iran wearing boy's clothes and her hair cropped, was told by police checking her ID: 'Go and change your gender!' For seven years she underwent hormone treatment, before realizing, thanks to friends living in Sweden, that she was simply a lesbian.

Marie, who grew up as a boy, was confused about her sexuality. After seeing a doctor she felt she must transition. But surgery did not help her: 'It increased my problems,' she told BBC reporter Ali Hamedani.

A psychologist, who works inside the Iranian system, says the trouble is that health professionals – and often their patients too – lack an understanding of the difference between gender and sexuality.

Meanwhile, many gay Iranians are taking the one-way railroad journey to exile in Turkey and beyond. ■

Sources: Ali Hamedani, BBC Persian Service, 'Iran's Sex Change Solution', 5 November 2014, nir.tl/coerced-gender-change, Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees, irqr.net/new2015/

Jeroen Oerlemans/Panos

I am what I am

There are myriad ways of being transgender – and experiences across the world are equally varied.

1 'You are shaming all men'

Cleo Quentaro, Uganda

'My body has always been androgynous, in between. If you are transgender it becomes you. In our culture, for a man to dress up as a woman is like degrading yourself to a woman, it is like an abuse to all men in society, it is like you are shaming all men... You are such a loser.

'I have been beaten up twice because I am transgender. On campus I had boys knocking on my door because they saw me as an easy alternative... this was one of the lowest moments for me, a boy raping me. That was how I lost my virginity, without my consent.

'I used contraceptives to try and feminize myself, but they can't do it like real hormones. My family fully accept me now, my friends have come to accept I'm trans. Through my Facebook [page] I've really come out. Later when I started transitioning I had to answer lots of questions. I had a community telling me: "please be careful".'

Source: *Mail&Guardian*, 'Transgender in Africa: the Great Divide', nln.tl/trans-in-africa



2 'We have put a foot inside the door'

Abhina Aher, India

'I used to love to wear the clothes that my mother used to wear – her jewellery, her make-up. At home, I used to have grand performances, calling all the neighbours and dancing in front of them, replicating what my mother was doing on stage. One day, she found out and got really mad about it. I had to pledge that I would never do that again.

'For 10 to 15 years, I had to watch myself, how I walk, how I talk, how I behave, to fit in. I finished college and I started working as a software engineer. There was a huge feeling of incompleteness all the time – having something wrong with your body, not being able to connect with your soul.'

Abhina attempted suicide three times: 'I could not die. And that was the turning point in my life, I thought that since I could not die, let me try to live now.'

Abhina joined a community of *hijras*, who traditionally go for castration. 'The operations are normally done by quacks, and a lot of hijras die because of that.'

On official recognition of hijras as a 'third gender' with civil rights, she says: 'We have put a foot inside a door, which is a door of hope, and we will open it – very soon.'

Source: *npr*, *Parallels*, 'A journey of pain and beauty' by Julie McCarthy, nln.tl/becoming-trans-in-india



Illustrations: Jason Barker

3 'I'm a very happy person'

Alva Funes, Uruguay

'From the age of 9 or 10 I knew I was different. It didn't bother my family. They accepted me. I have a mother who is very loving – no father. I have brothers, and we get on. When I was 17, I lived as a feminine gay. Then I got to know a trans person.

'I live independently as a trans person. I have worked in cabarets all over Uruguay. For 14 years now I have worked on the streets. I don't talk about my business with my mother. I keep my life and my family separate. It's my code. But my neighbours love me; they respect me. You can tell. I live the life I like; I am a very happy person. I feel my sexuality and live it fully. To keep going, you need to look after your body and know how to look after your client; you need to talk to him. I don't have a strategy as such. It just comes naturally...'

Source: Mil Voces – 'Travestis' by Juan Vicente Román and Luis Salati, nin.tl/divas-of-night



4 'The doctor told me it was very dangerous'

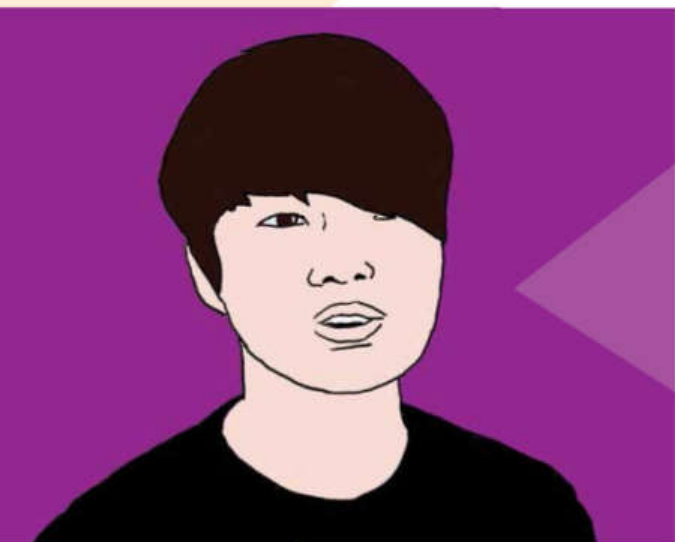
Tony, China

'I decided this year to take hormone injections. In the beginning my body's reaction was OK, but then I drank a cup of coffee and my body went into palpitations. The doctor told me it was very dangerous. My friends accept me as I am, they take care of me. I have not told my family I am transgender. I'm not ready. My mother asked me if I had a boyfriend. She is always asking me when I am going to get married. I just give my parents a sense of security by telling them I have a boyfriend.

'The problem I am facing is pretty big, I fear. I'm a boy who likes boys – 'trans gay', they call it. Lots of people talk about LGBT organizations but they do not pay attention to the T. Yesterday a "brother" [an FtM trans youth] was talking about a brother who had been taking hormones for three years and had just died of a visceral haemorrhage.

'Why do we have to suffer so much? Why did they give me this body? Why am I like this? Another brother told me, "Even if I kill myself, even if I die, I want to die with a flat chest."

Source: Queer Comrades documentaries, 'Brothers', nin.tl/trans-in-China



5 'It's awkward for my kids'

Joshua, Denmark

'I am still listed in the school system as [my children's] mum. The others kids at the school ask about it because they see the [female] name [yet I have a male appearance]. It's very awkward for me and my kids. If you don't have your gender identity recognized you always have to explain: "I used to be so-and-so and now I am so-and-so." You have to "out" yourself all the time and sometimes it makes you feel afraid... The idea that trans people should not have kids is an insult to my three kids; the mental diagnosis [of transgender] is completely demeaning and gives you a big dose of low self-esteem. I went to the Sexology Clinic three times. I hated their questions. They were overly fascinated by the fact that I have three kids and I used to be married to a guy. They focused only on my sexual life...'

Source: Amnesty International, *The State Decides Who I Am*, nin.tl/AI-trans-report





6 'Please do not kill yourself'

Kim Mukura, Uganda

'Trans men are victims of corrective rape, have been assaulted, victims of battering. They find themselves in financial incapacitation because they are not able to access employment. Even when we have qualifications, we cannot be employed because these places do not have non-discriminatory policies.

'We are the most at risk, the most vulnerable. We are gender minorities, minorities within minorities.

'Issues around transitioning include depression, anxiety, loss of self-esteem, suicidal tendencies and then there is the limitation of not being able to access hormones, surgery...

But if you are a trans man, please do not kill yourself, please do not suffer. You are not supposed to suffer, there is nothing wrong with you, you are not abnormal. Please love yourself – be proudly trans.'

Source: *Mail&Guardian*, 'Transgender in Africa: the Great Divide', nin.tl/trans-in-africa

7 'I have balls'

Emily Quinn, US

'I have balls. Not, like, basketballs, or footballs. I'm a girl who has testes.

'I've kept this fact quiet for many years, 15 to be exact. I was 10 when I found out I was intersex, but it wasn't until I was 22 that I even began to understand what that means.

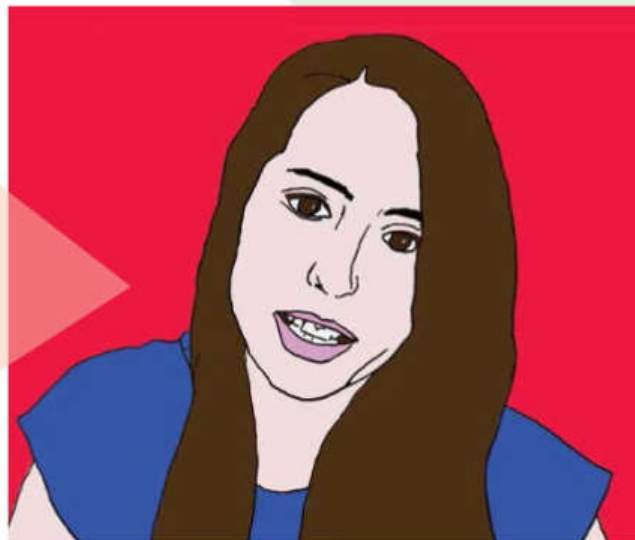
'I have a condition called Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (CAIS). I have XY chromosomes and internal testes, but my body is entirely unresponsive to testosterone, and externally I developed as a female. Internally, I don't have a uterus or ovaries, which means that I can never have biological children.

'You might think intersex people are like unicorns, so rare that you've only heard about us in books and fairy tales. I like to think we are pretty freaking magical, but we're actually not that rare. My AIS friends and I represent an estimated 1 in 20,000 births and intersex people in general occur in about 1 in every 2,000.

'We are not rare, just invisible. Unfortunately, there's a lot of shame and secrecy within our communities, perpetuating the invisibility. So many intersex people like me have been instructed by our doctors, parents and friends not to tell anyone about our conditions, which makes us feel shameful and unworthy.

'It wasn't until I found the AIS-DSD (Disorder of Sexual Development) Support Group that I began to meet people who understood what I was going through. I also joined Inter/Act, an amazing intersex youth advocacy group. There I started telling my story and, for the first time, became empowered as an intersex person.'

Source: AIS-DSD Support Group blog, 'I'm Emily Quinn and I'm intersex' nin.tl/emily-quinn



8 'Most are invisible and alone'

Jack Byrne, Aotearoa/New Zealand

'Invisibility of trans men and trans masculine people is another form of violence – and has devastating impacts on our physical and mental health. The majority of trans boys and men in this region still question their gender identity alone, with no knowledge that they have a community or a history and no words to describe who they are.'

Source: IGLHRC, Reflection on Transgender Day of Remembrance, 20 November 2013.

Ma vie en jaune*

JENNIE KERMODE on being 'in the middle'.

The first time I remember thinking about my gender was when I was three. I asked my mother what colour people chose when they didn't know what sex the baby was going to be. She said yellow. I asked for my room to be painted yellow and obtained a yellow shirt which I wore as often as I could. Most now are aware that some people with female bodies feel like boys, and vice versa. But then there are others, like me, who don't feel like either.

Experiencing oneself differently when one has no language with which to express it is disconcerting. Back in 1976, understanding of queer identities was rare. For the next 11 years I saw myself as some kind of malformed girl. I wasn't the only one aware of a difference. At school, I was always on the boys' side in games against girls. They wouldn't let me play football with them because I wasn't a boy, but they let me referee because, they said, I wasn't really a girl either. Girls distrusted me. I could dress like them, try to speak like them, but we couldn't relate to one another. It was something that went deeper than my feminist politics or the fact I got into fights. They seemed to sense that I wasn't one of them, as if I were an accidental spy.

Could transition have helped? I thought about it in my teens. I always dressed in jeans and t-shirts then; I cut off my hair and got serious about swimming in an attempt to build up my muscles. But I wasn't sure that I wouldn't feel the same way, just from the other side. So I went on with my failed woman-ness, buoying my confidence by blaming women for failing to be more like me. When I was 28, I learned that I am intersex.

It wasn't a complete shock. I'd been very ill with hormone-related problems in my teens, had seen many specialists, but back then it was common for the truth to be withheld from children. I was not unlucky enough to have my genitals cut up in infancy, so only with the development of further health complications did the truth emerge. In time I would learn that most intersex people experience themselves as male or female, but at the time it felt like an explanation – it felt like *permission*. I had to rethink everything about who I was, and about who other people were. I had to accept my difference and stop railing against the world.

*'My life in yellow'



Stewart Crowford

Jennie Kermode: 'I had to rethink everything about who I was.'

In the years since, I have grown increasingly comfortable in my identity; but it has been a strange journey because, at the same time, my body has disintegrated. Although the term intersex refers to a number of different physical variations, one thing many of us have in common is a greater vulnerability to auto-immune diseases. In my case it's a mixture of several, including lupus and scleroderma. As a result, my muscle has wasted away, and I have been left with acute dysphoria – a sense that my flesh can no longer express my identity. Dysphoria is a word that tends to be associated with binary trans people. Non-binary people are sometimes perceived as experiencing a less extreme form of transness, as people who may need to change a little bit

It can feel exhausting when every expression of selfhood is perceived as a political statement or demand for attention

TRANS-ACTION

The following are trans, intersex and supporting organizations:

What does *non-binary* mean?

Non-binary is an umbrella term for people who don't experience themselves as male or female. Some see themselves as in between, some as having elements of both (at the same time or on a fluctuating basis), and some as being unable to relate to gender at all. They may use a number of different terms to describe themselves, such as *genderqueer*, *agender* or *androgynous*. Around 35 per cent have chosen to adopt the honorific *Mx* (an equivalent to *Mr* or *Ms*) which is currently being considered for inclusion by the Oxford English Dictionary.

The problem with pronouns

Most people now realize that they should refer to a trans woman as *she* and a trans man as *he*, but what about non-binary people? Some don't mind these traditionally gendered terms but others do, opting for neologisms like *xie* or *zie*. A small number choose *it*, though others consider this pejorative. An increasingly popular option is *they*, whose use in the singular for hypothetical persons of unknown gender has a long pedigree and was championed by the likes of Jane Austen. This is a pretty safe bet if you don't know someone's preference, but the best thing to do is simply to ask!

but not go 'all the way'. But being *in the middle* (a description not all non-binary people would relate to) doesn't mean feeling any more comfortable with a body that gives a misleading impression, or with other people's reactions.

For me, there is no solution, no surgery that can resolve things. In a society that associates muscularity, physical competence and independence with maleness, disability renders everyone more feminine. It's something I cope with day to day by trying not to think about it, and being housebound means that I can largely avoid being confronted by other people's judgments. But the feeling of wrongness never goes away, and in the binary sex environments of hospitals it can become acute. There, I feel forced into a lie, required to perform continually. Little slips elicit hostility. Certain masculine traits can be profoundly unwelcome in female spaces, but I don't mean to be an intruder; I would far rather be acknowledged as an outsider, be an ally rather than be subsumed.

Trying to find a place in a society that doesn't recognize one's existence is an endless struggle. It can feel exhausting when every expression of selfhood is perceived as a political statement or demand for attention. But today, even if the world cannot recognize me, I can at least be honest with myself, and a whole person. ■

Jennie Kermode is a writer and chair of Trans Media Watch, which is dedicated to improving media coverage of trans and intersex issues

INTERNATIONAL

Global Action for Trans Equality (GATE)
transactivists.org

International Professional Association for Transgender Health
wpath.org

Trans Respect v Transphobia
transrespect-transphobia.org

Amnesty International
amnesty.org.uk

Open Society Foundations
opensocietyfoundations.org

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Agender NZ

agender.org.nz
Support and lobbying for trans people, their families, friends and co-workers

Intersex Trust Aotearoa New Zealand
ianz.org.nz
Information/education and training

Human Rights Commission
hrc.co.nz
Deals with any discrimination of any gender

Rainbow Youth
ry.org.nz

OUTLineNZ
outline.org.nz

AUSTRALIA

Ausgender
ausgender.com.au
Community-based support and social group

The Gender Centre
gendercentre.org.au
Grassroots gender-variant lobbying

Trans Health Australia
transhealthaustralia.org
Community-run advocacy group and peer support network

OII Australia – Intersex Australia
oii.org.au
Promotes human rights and bodily autonomy; information, education and support

BRITAIN

Press for Change
pfc.org.uk
Campaign group focusing on rights

Gender Trust
gendertrust.org.uk
Helps trans people and those affected by gender identity issues

Mermaids
mermaidsuk.org.uk
Supporting trans children and their parents

RESOURCES

Books

Trans by Juliet Jacques (Verso, 2015).
Trans Bodies, Trans Selves edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth (Oxford University Press, 2014)
Gender Outlaws: The next generation edited by Kate Bornstein and S Bear Bergman (Seal Press, 2010).
Tiny Pieces of Skull by Roz Kaveney (2015, Team Angelica)

Films

52 Tuesdays (2013) directed by Sophie Hyde
XXY (2007) directed by Lucia Puenzo.
Transamerica (2005) directed by Duncan Tucker.
Boys Don't Cry (1999) directed by Kimberly Pierce.
All About My Mother (1999) directed by Pedro Almodovar.
The Crying Game (1992) directed by Neil Jordan.

Gendered Intelligence

genderedintelligence.co.uk
Creative workshops for trans youth nationwide

The Gender Identity Research and Education Society
gires.org.uk

Sponsors research and education on gender identity

Trans Media Watch

transmediawatch.org
Improving media coverage of trans and intersex issues

Intersex UK

ukia.co.uk
Education, advocacy, campaigning and support for intersex people

Scottish Transgender Alliance
scottishtrans.org

Gender identity and gender reassignment equality, rights and inclusion

The Beaumont Society

beaumontsociety.org.uk
For people who cross-dress or are transsexual

CANADA

TransParent Canada

transparentcanada.ca
Support for parents of trans children

Canadian Professional Association for Transgender Health
cpath.ca

Trans Pulse

transpulseproject.ca
Community-based research

PFLAG

pflagcanada.ca
Provides support on sexual orientation and gender identity nationwide

US

GLAAD

glaad.org
Leading US campaign group

Intersex Society of North America

isna.org
Devoted to systemic change to end shame, secrecy, and unwanted genital surgeries



Del LaGrace Volcano

TV series

Boy Meets Girl (UK, 2015)
Transparent (US, 2014).

Web

My Generation:
mygeneration.com/vlogs
The TransAdvocate:
transadvocate.com

Sudan

The first genocide this century is raging in the Western Darfur region of Sudan and, despite having been acknowledged for a decade, it continues unabated. Never before has a genocide been identified as such while in progress, then left to take its brutal course.

In 2003, the Arab-Muslim government of Sudan launched a counter-insurgency offensive against two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, which were fighting for social and economic equality. Darfur's black-African Fur and Zaghawa tribes, suspected of being rebel sympathizers, were targeted by the government-sponsored Janjaweed militia, which went on the rampage, burning homes and slaughtering civilians.

There was an opportunity to stop the carnage in 2005, by making the cessation of violence in Darfur a condition of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ostensibly brought 20 years of war between the North and South of Sudan to an end. The cost of so-called peace in the South though, was silence on the oil-rich region of Darfur. The CPA had other inherent flaws, such as failing to resolve the status of the Abyei region as well as of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, leaving those civilians exposed and vulnerable when the South seceded in 2011. Neglecting to deal

with disputed oil-rich border regions allowed Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir to exploit border uncertainty, which he continues to do today.

Also in 2005, the international community unanimously signed the 'Responsibility to Protect' mandate. This requires them to intervene, by any means necessary, to protect civilians being persecuted by their sovereign state. It has never been implemented in Darfur. In total 16 UN resolutions have been passed in Darfur, all of which have been ignored.

The signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006 resulted in an acceleration of violence. The agreement excluded all but one rebel group and collapsed before the ink was dry. Khartoum retaliated with gusto. Black African villages were razed to the ground, boy children were tossed on bonfires, men were butchered, while girls and women were serially raped. Livestock was taken and crops were destroyed. Any survivors were destined for life in camps for internally displaced people, indefinitely dependent on aid for sustenance and shelter.

President al-Bashir was indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide in 2009. Within days, he expelled 16 aid agencies from Darfur. Over the past 12 years, an estimated 500,000 people have been slaughtered

and some four million displaced; all of whom are now dependent on aid, without which they face imminent death by starvation and disease. Six years after his indictment, al-Bashir has evaded arrest despite travelling to countries within the ICC's jurisdiction.

South Sudan became independent in 2011 following a self-determination referendum. In 2012, Sudan and South Sudan signed an agreement that meant oil supplies from the latter could resume their passage through pipes in the former but, like the CPA before it, the deal failed to resolve the status of Abyei, the disputed state that abuts the North-South border. As a result, hundreds of thousands more people have become refugees dependent on aid. Civilians in South Kordofan and Blue Nile are under constant bombardment from the capital Khartoum. The unresolved issues threaten to destabilize the already fragile fledgling state of South Sudan.

In 2013, a public uprising against Khartoum's lifting of fuel subsidies resulted in 200 demonstrators being shot dead by the militia. The government's exorbitant military spending is crippling the imploding economy. But it's the army, and international indifference, that enables the regime to keep its tenuous grip on power and its fugitives out of the ICC's dock. ■

Tess Finch-Lees

At a glance



Leader: President Omar al-Bashir.

Economy: GNI per capita \$1,130 (Egypt \$3,160, UK \$39,110).

Monetary unit: Sudanese pound.

Main exports: gold, oil and petroleum products, cotton, sesame, livestock, gum arabic. The economy was dependent on oil for foreign-exchange earnings, so the loss of three-quarters of its oil supplies following the independence of South Sudan has been a major blow. The economy is also hampered by sanctions imposed due to the regime's war crimes. Figures are unavailable for many key indicators but economists consider that the inflation rate is running at over 50%.

Population: 38.0 million. Annual population growth rate 1990-2013 2.8%. People per square kilometre 15 (UK 260).

Health: Infant mortality 51 per 1,000 live births (Egypt 19, UK 4). Lifetime risk of maternal death 1 in 60 (UK 1 in 6,900). HIV prevalence rate 0.2%. 45% of Sudanese do not have access to clean drinking water, though this rises to 90% in Darfur. 76% of Sudanese do not have adequate sanitation.

Environment: Desertification is an ongoing problem, and competition over scarce water resources can result in conflict. UNEP identifies a strong link between land degradation, desertification and conflict in Darfur.

Culture: Arab (70%), Fur, Beja, Nuba, Zaghawa.

Religion: Sunni Muslim, with a small Christian minority.

Language: Arabic and English both have official status.

Human Development Index: 0.473, 166th of 187 countries (Egypt 0.682, UK 0.892).





War child



Clockwise from top left: Loading sheep onto a truck crossing the desert in the Kordofan region of central Sudan. UN peacekeepers patrolling through Nyoro, in Western Darfur, as displaced people returned home for the first time in a decade in 2012. The Abubakir family – Abdallah, Asha, Mustapha and Salima – were among those returning to their home in Darfur after fleeing to Chad in 2003. People and buses in the capital, Khartoum, in front of a high-rise building unfinished for lack of funds. A wrestling competition in the north of Khartoum organized by the city's Nuba community. Photos by Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures

Star ratings

Last profiled July 2002



INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★

The gulf between the elite in Khartoum and the mass of ordinary people is vast.

2002 ★★



LITERACY ★★

73%. Net enrolment in primary school is 52% but completion far lower.

2002 ★★



LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★

61 years (Egypt 71, UK 81). Up from 56 when last profiled.

2002 ★



FREEDOM ★

There is no media freedom in Sudan. Foreign media are heavily restricted and for the most part not permitted access. The Darfuri-run Radio Dabanga is broadcast from Holland.

2002 ★★



POSITION OF WOMEN ★

Rape of girls and women is routinely used as a weapon of war in Darfur yet UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's recent report on the region recorded incidences of carjacking but not of rape. FGM affects 68% of Sudanese girls and women. Public floggings of women are not uncommon.

2002 ★



SEXUAL MINORITIES ★

Homosexuality is punishable by death: on the third offence for men and the fourth offence for women.

NI assessment

POLITICS ★

Omar al-Bashir was re-elected as president in April. The vote was boycotted by major opposition parties and criticized by Western governments as illegitimate. Sudan is plagued by massive foreign debt, which the government cannot repay. Without radical political reforms involving the cessation of regional violence, economic recovery is unobtainable. There is growing unrest within the ruling National Congress Party and previously loyal supporters are becoming alienated. Two things stand between President al-Bashir and defeat: his army and the international community's inaction.

★★★★★ EXCELLENT
★★★★ GOOD
★★★ FAIR
★★ POOR
★ APPALLING

Minorities report

Elections on 8 November will decide the future of Burma's recent reforms – but will the country's many religious and ethnic groups finally get to have a say in the outcome? TINA BURRETT looks ahead.

When the nominally civilian government took power from the military in March 2011, it brought with it hope for change. Most dramatically, the government's reforms allowed Aung San Suu Kyi and her opposition National League of Democracy (NLD) to contest parliamentary by-elections in April 2012, following her release from house arrest in November 2010. Hundreds of political prisoners were released and laws passed to provide better protection for human rights; restrictions on media freedom were reduced; and preliminary peace agreements were reached with many armed ethnic groups.

Yet despite this, many repressive laws remain. In November 2014, Aung San Suu Kyi declared that the international community had been too optimistic. Human rights groups concur, arguing that significant backsliding occurred in 2014 on the progress made since political reforms began in 2011, especially regarding minority rights.

Challenges and opportunities

The outcome of this November's elections will be decided partly by the votes of Burma's ethnic minorities. The majority Burmans, who make up approximately 68 per cent of the population, will vote alongside 134 official minority groups.

But recent reforms present challenges as well as opportunities for Burma's religious and ethnic minorities, including the Chin, Karen, Kachin, Naga and the much-persecuted Muslim Rohingya.

In northwest Burma, the government-initiated peace process is bringing new opportunities to Naga communities that until recently fought against the military. A new generation of village chiefs is embracing

UN development projects and eco-tourism to connect with a globalizing world.

But attitudes to outsiders are mixed. When I visit Burmese Nagaland – one of the first foreigners to do so – I meet teenagers clutching Chinese mobile phones who are excited by a future beyond their village. Their grandfathers are more sceptical of change. Inside their bamboo huts, they sit shrouded in pipe smoke, while the younger Naga tell me excitedly about plans to build a hostel in the hopes of attracting tourists.

The votes of Burma's minorities could be decisive in November's elections – if they are counted. This man is from the Rakhine ethnic group, which makes up about 3.5 per cent of the population.



C.E.J. Simons



Asked about the impact of the upcoming elections on their village, the Naga are equally cynical, regardless of generation. ‘The authorities will bring ballot boxes to the village,’ the chief tells me, ‘but whether our votes will be counted or will end up in the river, we don’t know.’ As the election will be closely contested, representatives of both the governing Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) and opposition NLD are courting support in remote communities. On the mountain road into Nagaland I cross paths with a general who is touring local villages ahead of the election. I eat at the same ramshackle restaurant; the only item on the menu is dried goat meat. The general, suspicious-eyed and rotund, chews on the best meat, while his underlings eat goat offal that smells as horrible as it sounds.

Back in the village, the Naga tell me they have little time for current President Thein Sein and the USDP. As one villager tells me: ‘The USDP representatives come here and tell us what the government has done for us and that we should be grateful.’ The majority of the Naga I meet support the NLD. An elderly Naga woman with tattooed legs explains, ‘When NLD campaigners visit they ask us what we want the party to do for us. They listen to our needs rather than telling us why we should vote for them.’ Village support for the NLD is so high that one man has turned his meagre home into a local party headquarters. The NLD flag flies proudly above his doorway. Nearby, his blind wife peels vegetables with surprising speed and skill.

Constitutional deadlock

Since the reform process began, the Burmese government has agreed ceasefires with many of Burma’s ethnic armed groups, not only the Naga. Ceasefire accords allow the government to avoid conflict on multiple fronts in border areas, and thus to focus on countering political opposition in central Burma. However, efforts to conclude a common National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) have so far failed. As negotiations proceeded during June and July, fighting continued in several states, including Shan and Kachin. Ethnic armed groups’ demands for regional autonomy and a federal system of government remain major sticking points. The current national constitution contains no provisions for regional autonomy. The very first line of the constitution prohibits secession.

Without support from the military, the Burmese constitution is impossible to amend. Constitutional provisions guarantee the military 25 per cent of parliamentary seats; the constitution also requires the support of 75 per cent of parliamentarians to pass an amendment, giving the military an effective veto on

constitutional reform. In late June, Burma’s parliament voted against amending the 75-per-cent rule ahead of November’s election.

Constitutionally, individuals with a foreign spouse or children are barred from contesting the presidency. This means that Aung San Suu Kyi – who has two British sons – cannot hold the country’s top job. Some ethnic minority groups have accused the Nobel Laureate of spending too much time campaigning to lift this constitutional bar rather than focusing on the issues that affect the lives of ordinary citizens. A journalist and activist from Kachin states that ‘the Lady should devote more time to discussing transport, devolution of power, human rights and even stray dogs – these are the issues that affect people’s day-to-day lives.’ Aung San Suu Kyi’s silence on the government’s renewal of its war against the Kachin in 2011 has further alienated support for the NLD. She has also been criticized by fellow Nobel

‘The authorities will bring ballot boxes to the village, but whether our votes will be counted or will end up in the river, we don’t know’

Peace Prize winner the Dalai Lama for failing adequately to condemn rampant anti-Muslim violence that began against the Rohingya people in Rakhine state and has since spread across Burma.

The Rohingya make up around 800,000 of the country’s 56-million population, and rank at the bottom of Burma’s social hierarchy. Currently, Burma’s constitution does not include the Rohingya among the country’s indigenous groups, categorizing them as ‘non-national’ or ‘foreign residents’. The Rohingya were officially deprived of citizenship under a 1982 law enacted by the then-ruling military junta. Living in squalid refugee camps or makeshift villages in Rakhine, the majority of the Rohingya will be unable to take part in this year’s elections.

No vote

Owing to a lack of access to information, even officially recognized minorities may have difficulty exercising their voting rights. As Mai Democracy, editor at *Chin World Media*, explains: ‘In rural areas where most minorities live, few have access to television, or even radio. There are few newspapers published in minority languages, and those... face distribution and funding difficulties. The mainstream media pay little attention to issues

Soe Zeya Tun/Reuters



'The Lady should devote more time to discussing the issues that affect people's day-to-day lives'

force that could thwart the League's ambitions to take power. According to Kyaw Min Swe, chief editor of national newspaper *The Voice*: 'The NLD should make a pre-election pact with ethnic minority parties not to contest the same seats. Otherwise they will play into the government's plans to divide and rule.'

The ultimate test of Burma's reforms will be whether there is a real transfer of power after the election. The military has promised 'free and fair' elections, but it remains to be

seen whether it will honour the results. In elections in 1990, although the NLD won by a landslide, the junta refused to relinquish power. Burma's transition is likely to be long and protracted. Any long-term change must be bottom-up and inclusive of the country's diverse peoples. ■

Tina Burrett is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Sophia University, Tokyo.

The National League of Democracy has been travelling the country to garner votes. Here, youngsters listen to leader Aung San Suu Kyi giving a speech in Thanlyin township, August 2015.

facing minority groups. When minorities do appear in the press, it is usually in connection with an insurgency or inter-communal violence.'

A perceived lack of interest in minority issues among the Burman has led many ethnic groups to form their own separate political parties to contest parliamentary elections. In November, parties such as the Chin League for Democracy and the Karen National Party will compete against the NLD, potentially creating a third

OPEN WINDOW

Each month we showcase the work of a different cartoonist – in collaboration with cartoonmovement.com

THIS MONTH

Alex Falco Chang from Cuba with 'Another Migrant Tragedy'.

After a succession of terrible incidents in which migrants have drowned, should the Mediterranean be renamed the Styx?

Carlos Alejandro (Alex) Falco Chang is a cartoonist based in the Cuban capital, Havana, currently working for the newspaper *Juventud Rebelde* (Rebel Youth). He has had 12 solo exhibitions of his work, which has been published all over the world.





A Pope in Washington

'Some people say my economic ideals are radical,' Vermont socialist and presidential long-shot Bernie Sanders recently tweeted. 'You should hear what the Pope is saying.'

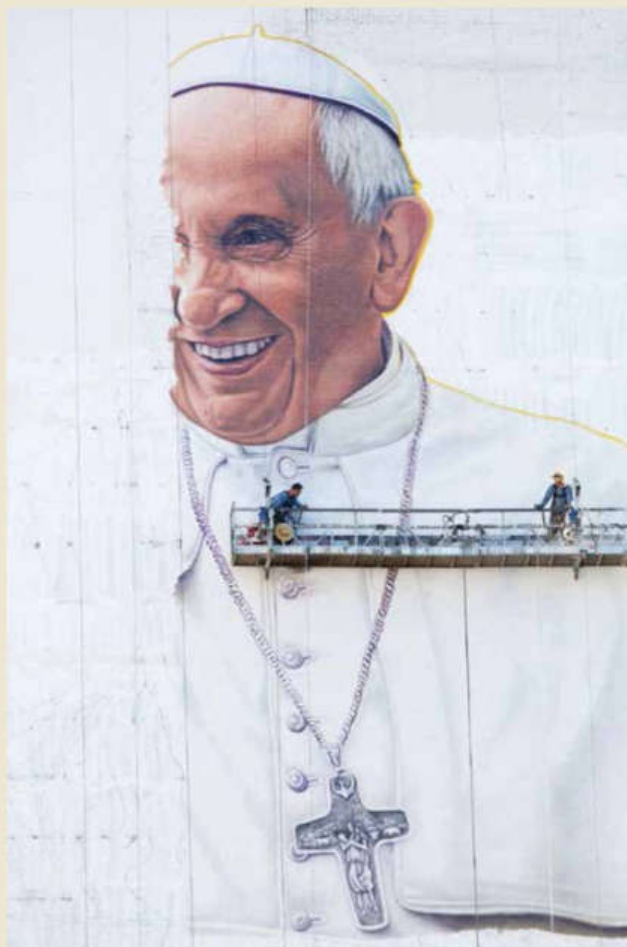
Although the Catholic Church is often viewed as a conservative force in US political life, Pope Francis's visit to the US in September has provided an opportunity to recognize a different side of papal politics. Over the past two years, the pontiff has advanced a message of social justice more bracing than what any Washington politician of recent memory has mustered.

In the US, the leaders of the Catholic Church are generally known to be fixated on banning abortion and opposing gay rights. During the 2004 elections, an archbishop in St Louis suggested that candidate John Kerry, a Catholic, should be denied communion because of his support for women's reproductive rights.

In June, the president of the US bishops' conference declared the Supreme Court's decision to legalize same-sex marriage a 'tragic error' – a position that was thankfully disregarded by the majority of Americans, who recognized the ruling as an overdue blow against bigotry.

Such social stances by the Catholic hierarchy remain a problem. But the church has at times played a progressive role in US politics. In 2006, when millions flooded the streets protesting legislation that would have made it illegal to provide humanitarian assistance to undocumented immigrants, Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles sided with demonstrators. He vowed to lead a campaign of civil disobedience if the conservative bill became law.

This summer, a variety of Catholic leaders denounced Donald Trump for bashing immigrants, with Bishop Kevin Farrell of Dallas warning that



Painting a pontiff: a New York City office building prepares to welcome Pope Francis.

'the ghost of Nativism again prowls our land'.

It's not merely reactionaries such as Trump who should be squirming. Over the past two years, Pope Francis has voiced a critique of capitalism that challenges even ostensibly liberal candidates such as Hillary Clinton – who, inconveniently enough, served for six years on the board of directors of WalMart.

Although he is the first pontiff from Latin America, Francis was not a devotee of liberation theology when it emerged from the Global South in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, he has consistently stressed what Catholic theologians call the 'preferential option for the poor'.

As the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, the future Pope Francis led his country's bishops in blasting the neoliberal economics that had thrown Argentina into crisis in 2000, decrying 'the tyranny of the markets'.

During his time in the Vatican, he has made a condemnation of market fundamentalism central to his vision of what it means to live the Gospels today.

Speaking in Bolivia in July, he argued that the unfettered pursuit of money is 'the dung of the devil' and called for a global movement against a 'new colonialism' founded in inequality.

'Once capital becomes an idol and guides people's decisions, once greed for money presides over the entire socioeconomic system, it ruins society,' Pope Francis stated. In particular, he singled out 'corporations, loan agencies, certain "free trade" treaties, and the imposition of measures of "austerity"' as agents of exploitation.

'This system is by now intolerable: farm workers find it intolerable, labourers find it intolerable, communities find it intolerable... The earth itself – our sister, Mother

Earth, as Saint Francis would say – also finds it intolerable.'

He concluded: 'Let us not be afraid to say it: we want change, real change, structural change.'

A variety of politicians no doubt viewed the pontiff's stop in Washington as an opportunity to shake hands and take cheery photos. But if that is the case, they did so with wax in their ears.

If religious leaders have a constructive role to play in political life, it should be one of discomfiting the powerful. In his finest moments, Pope Francis has taken this as his mandate. By the time you read this, we will know whether he used his trip to the US as an occasion to continue it. ■

Mark Engler's new book *This Is An Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-first Century* will be released in early 2016. He can be reached via the website DemocracyUprising.com

Mixed Media

99 Homes (112 minutes)

directed and co-written by **Ramin Bahrani**

A man in a crisp linen suit checks out the property he's just repossessed. He's hard-faced, foul-mouthed, and sneers at the expense and inconvenience of cleaning up after the mortgage defaulter who has shot himself.

He's Rick Carver, a thriving Florida real-estate shark. Next on his list is Dennis Nash, a building worker who

lost his job, and his last month's pay, when his employer went bankrupt. His mom runs a hairdressing business in their bungalow; his son goes to the local school. Carver tells them the bank now owns the property. They have two minutes to remove themselves and essential documents and possessions before his team transfer everything to the sidewalk.

Next morning Nash turns up at Carver's office – the removals guys have stolen his tools, and he wants them back. He doesn't get them, but he's offered a job – \$50 to clean out the shit from a repossessed house whose foreclosed owners had deliberately blocked the drains. He takes it.

Bahrani is a politically committed filmmaker whose previous films – *Man Push Cart*, *Chop Shop* and *Goodbye Solo* – show great understanding and empathy for migrants and outsiders. Now, with name actors, and a bigger budget and audience, he's made a hard-hitting, fast-moving feature about the haves and have nots, the vicious consequences of government and business policy.

Dennis, hoping to earn enough to get back the family home, is drawn into Carver's world. Carver is a memorable, iconic lizard-human, a Gordon Gecko 30 years on: 'America was built by bailing out winners. The country is rigged.' Punchy, passionate and deeply affecting – do not miss this.

★★★★★ ML



Real-estate evil in Ramin Bahrani's punchy and passionate feature.

A Girl at My Door (119 minutes)

written and directed by **July Jung**

A police chief, to escape a sexual scandal, is transferred to a small South Korean coastal town. There, the police don't do things by the book. Neither does the chief – if, for a year or so, she keeps her head down, her hands clean, she can transfer back to Seoul. But she's challenged when she tries to help Do-hee, a local teenager who is beaten by her stepfather, grandmother, and classmates.

Her stepfather is a drunk who smuggles in illegal migrant labour, and is protected by the local police. He also has a hold over the chief – he's seen her kissing her visiting former girlfriend. One night, Do-hee turns up at her door after a particularly nasty beating, and the chief takes her in. Some time later, when the chief arrests him for a particularly nasty beating of an illegal worker, the affronted stepfather accuses her of sexual abuse of his daughter.

Well made, acted and directed, it shifts in tone from amused, disinterested observation of the yokels, to an ambiguous and uncomfortable view. The film leaves a strong sense of the impact of violence on personality.

★★★★ ML

FILM

Just trying to help – the police chief (right) faces teenager, Do-hee, in July Jung's *A Girl at My Door*.

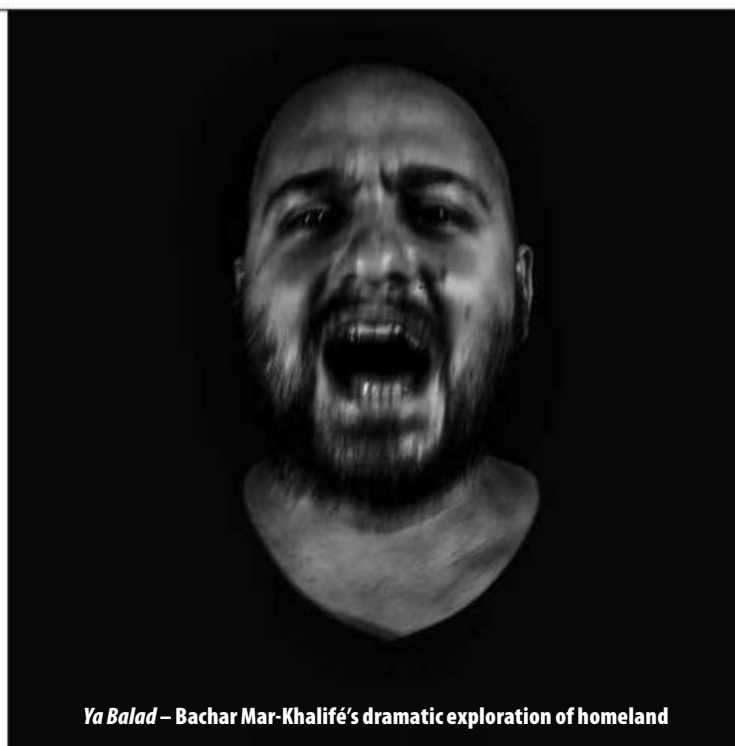


Ya Balad

by **Bachar Mar-Khalifé** (InFiné/Warp CD, LP + download, IF1033)

Ya Balad translates from the Arabic as ‘Oh Homeland’. But, as its creator, the Paris-based Lebanese musician Bachar Mar-Khalifé realizes, the very concept of homeland is not so simple. Is homeland a place, a memory, a scent? The idea of home is a potent one in art and politics and the absence of a safe place is a powerful instigation to creativity. It’s possible that this is one reason why the album’s title song has few lyrics, other than an urgent phrase that eventually dies in a murmur.

Ya Balad is a dramatic album, employing a passionate voice that soars above keyboards and percussion. It is dominated by piano and voice, from the pointillist reduction of ‘Ya Balad’ to the frenetic excursions on the album’s opener, a *Kyrie Eleison* unlike any one you have ever heard and one which calls for interfaith peace. This album maintains a conversation between its creator’s Western classical education and his formative Arabic musical experiences and the results are generally enriching. With its cod-reggae rhythm, ‘Balcoon’ is a gentle lampoon of an international pop culture full of sound and no meaning, but Khalifé is at his best when he moves into genuine expressive territory. With highpoints found in the sweet ‘Yalla Tnam



Ya Balad – Bachar Mar-Khalifé’s dramatic exploration of homeland

Nada’ (sung by Iranian actor Golshifteh Farahani) and the thrilling lurches of ‘Laya Yabnaya’, Mar-Khalifé has come up with something really interesting.

★★★★ LG
infine-music.com

MUSIC

Try To Be Hopeful

by **The Spook School** (Fortuna POP!, CD, LP + download, FPOP191CD / FPOP191LP)

The four Spook School students are way too young to have heard bands such as Buzzcocks or Altered Images the first time round, but that hasn’t stopped this Edinburgh outfit from hitting gold with their perky release. Treble-heavy and guitar-driven in a way that is reminiscent of Buzzcocks’ ‘Winfield wall of sound’ (a reference to the earlier band’s cheap guitars from Woolworth’s), **Try To Be Hopeful** bounces along at a fair lick. It’s an assertive album, bashful in all the right places, and Nye and Adam Todd (guitars), Anna Cory (bass) and Niall McCamley (drums) – they all do vocals – deliver the goods with a good-humoured, no-frills approach.



The Spook School – rocks queer-core fringe.

So far, so good. But what marks out the Spook School and this, its second album, is the lyrics. Emotionally literate and politically conscious, the journey that transman Nye Todd has made in his personal life comes through in them. Songs like ‘Burn Masculinity’ and ‘Binary’ take unerring aim at gender norms and if this sounds all a bit Judith Butler, that’s nothing to worry about: there are plenty of other pieces that capture all the frissons and fizzles of adolescent excitement in glorious detail. For all its historical glam, rock music is often a conservative medium and the bands that run counter to the trend (The Gossip, for example) stick out a mile. The Spooks currently inhabit rock’s queercore fringes, but let’s hope that the band can find bigger stages in the future: we all deserve it.

★★★★★ LG
thespookschool.com

The Underground

by **Hamid Ismailov**, translated by **Carol Ermakova** (Restless Books, ISBN 9781632060440)



Hamid Ismailov's novel charts the short life and untimely death of Mbobo, also known as Kirill, child of a Siberian mother and an African athlete competing in the 1980 Moscow Olympics. Abandoned by his father and suffering the intermittent, loving but drunken care of his mother and a succession of 'uncles', Mbobo reflects on 12 years of life as the poverty-stricken mixed-race victim of endemic racism in a Soviet Union teetering on the edge of collapse.

In short, punchy chapters which trace the stations on the Moscow underground, Ismailov gives us a suitably gloomy portrait of the soul of Russia, fuelled by alcohol and alternately buttressed and assailed by history. Mbobo's infant incomprehension of the forces of change swirling around him is an ironic echo of the

failure of the adults to apprehend the import of what they are living through. Ismailov's prose, ably translated by Carol Ermakova, is dense and allusive, thick with references to Russian folklore and literature, from Gorky and Turgenev to Dostoyevsky and – repeatedly and primarily – Alexander Pushkin.

The Underground is a dark, gnarly, difficult novel, mining poetry from the squalid and the subterranean, and this reader was particularly grateful for the glossary of political, cultural and literary allusions. However, its depiction of a damaged individual's doomed attempt to plot a course through a dysfunctional and disintegrating society is consummate and compelling.

★★★ PW

restlessbooks.com

BOOKS The New Threat From Islamic Militancy

by **Jason Burke** (Vintage/Bodley Head, ISBN 9781847923479)

Guardian correspondent Jason Burke has written a remarkably thorough primer on Islamist violence. The sweep of **The New Threat** takes us from the assassination of Egypt's President Sadat in 1981 to the rise of Islamic State, via al-Qaeda, two Gulf wars and a grisly catalogue of terrorist massacres.

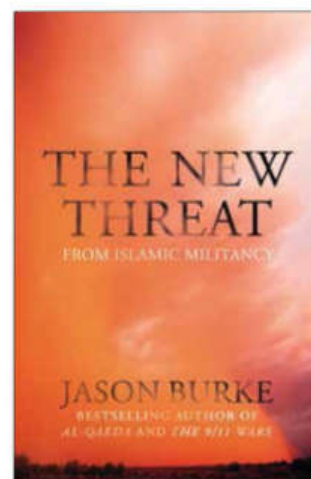
Al-Qaeda's capacity to carry out 9/11-style atrocities is today significantly diminished, and yet the threat persists. The bogey *du moment* is not the sophisticated global network but the precocious self-starter: Merah, Adebolajo and Adebowale, the brothers Tsarnaev and Kouachi, et al. Burke takes issue with the 'lone wolf' designation beloved of security discourse and tabloid caricature. These perpetrators were ideologically sustained by social units

– families, peer groups, online communities. The process of radicalization and recruitment is, he insists, 'a fundamentally social activity.'

The New Threat strikes a refreshingly measured note. For all their murderous determination, the terrorists do not pose an existential threat to any Western nation. And IS's mission to eliminate what it calls 'the Grey Zone' – the complex multiplicity of personal identities in contemporary society – in favour of a singular tenet of blind devotion, is surely doomed to failure. As Burke affectingly observes, the Grey Zone is the repository of 'all that is best about the world [and] is worth protecting, with all the means and courage we have.'

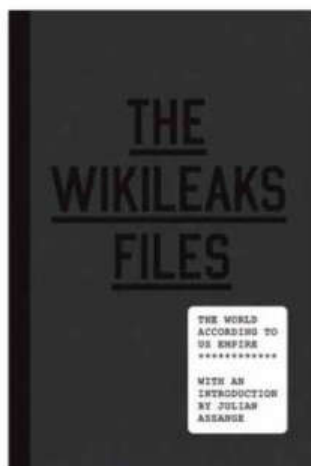
★★★★ HB

penguinrandomhouse.com



The WikiLeaks Files The World According to US Empire

by **WikiLeaks**, introduction by **Julian Assange** (Verso, ISBN 978 17816 89448)



In 2010 WikiLeaks began publishing more than two million US diplomatic cables and State Department records. To meet the need for scholarly analysis of what these millions of documents say about modern international relations and geopolitics, they have produced a book, **The WikiLeaks Files**.

It situates the US Empire in global history and offers a user's guide, written by investigations editor Sarah Harrison, on how to research the cables and their content. Analysts review how the US engaged with dictatorships, human rights and the 'War on Terror'; while experts on specific areas of foreign policy, including Robert Naiman, Phyllis Bennis, Stephen Zunes and Gareth Porter, examine the cables. These reveal

US meddling in Syria; acceptance of Israeli violations of international law, information, about the invasion of Afghanistan and on how the US dealt with the International Atomic Energy Agency over Iran's nuclear development.

Julian Assange, writing the book's introduction, proposes that the diplomatic cables of the State Department are the by-product of its activities. Their publication 'is the vivisection of a living empire, showing what substance flowed from which state organ and when,' he writes.

Useful, scholarly, timely – and, as you would expect, eye-opening.

★★★★ CS

versobooks.com

America's Dreyfus The Case Nixon Rigged

by **Joan Brady** (Scyscraper Publications, ISBN 9780993153327)

In 1950 the high-flying US diplomat Alger Hiss was found guilty of perjury relating to espionage charges and sentenced to two concurrent five-year terms of imprisonment. The trial, which came at the height of the Cold War and the US anti-communist witch hunt, hinged on the testimony of an ex-communist, Whittaker Chambers, and the case was orchestrated by Richard Nixon, at the time a junior member of Congress.

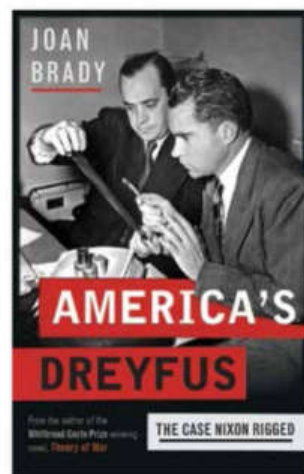
Joan Brady knew Hiss personally and it is her contention that Nixon knowingly distorted, manipulated and invented evidence and shamelessly used the red-baiting press in order to secure a conviction and advance his own political career. Brady's account is engagingly written and she argues persuasively – if not entirely conclusively – that Hiss was 'a wronged and innocent man battling the vast resources of an unjust state'. She shuttles between a forensic examination

of the evidence against Hiss and a highly personal memoir and, although the gossipy, subjective tone occasionally grates, she succeeds in throwing substantial doubt on the soundness of the verdict.

For a contemporary audience, the value of Brady's investigation, beyond historical interest, lies in the parallels she draws between the Hiss case and the ongoing 'war on terror'. She cites comparisons with Chelsea Manning, Julian Assange and Edward Snowden and, tellingly, quotes the Cold War strategist George Kennan: 'Were the Soviet Union to sink tomorrow under the waters of the ocean, the American military-industrial complex would have to remain substantially unchanged until some other adversary could be invented. Anything else would be an unacceptable shock to the American economy.'

★★★★ PW

skyscraperpublications.com



Also out there...

MUSIC *Y Dydd Olaf* (The Last Day) is a glorious work of sci-fi-influenced electro-pop, from Cardiff's **Gwenno**. Sung mostly in her native Welsh (with a bit of Cornish for good measure), Gwenno originally released this in a minuscule edition on local label Peski, before Heavenly snapped it up for a bigger release. There's something Portishead-like about its floating melodies and Gwenno's voice has a strong presence.



Led by the Damascus-born, London-based oud player Khyam Allami, **Alif** is a five-strong group of Middle Eastern musicians fluent in the vocabulary of both traditional and experimental musics. Exhilarating in its reach, *Aynama-Rtama* (Wherever It Falls, released by Nawa) offers settings of lyrics by Mahmoud Darwish and other luminaries.

FILM Long-term readers of this magazine will be familiar with the unique and intense work of Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado. Shooting only in black and white, he has got closer to his subjects and the great social and political themes he covers, than, probably, any other living photographer. **Salt of the Earth** documents his life and work across the world – including the despair he experienced



after covering the Rwandan genocide, and the return to life with his great nature project, *Genesis*. The film, directed by Wim Wenders and Salgado's son Julian Ribiero, also shows the key role played by Lélia Wanick, Sebastião's wife, agent and generator of ideas. Engaged, unusual, wonderful.

The social and political context is strong in the tense, moody, stunning-looking Spanish thriller **Marshland**, where two ill-matched detectives investigate the murder of two schoolgirls in the immediate post-Franco years.

Magali Pettier's **Addicted to Sheep** is an attractive, unsentimental doc about people happy because they have a strong sense of belonging and the value of their work farming sheep on the Pennine Moors.

Tangerines is about two Estonians who stay in their Georgian village to harvest tangerines when the war with Abkhazia surrounds them. They find themselves nursing two wounded combatants who want to kill each other. A serious, well-made drama.

BOOKS In her new book, **Shadow Sovereigns** (Polity), Susan George homes in on the global corporations that are increasingly seizing power, demanding control over decisions that affect labour laws, finance, public health, food, agriculture, trade, everything. Knowledge is power and she provides us with plenty with which to challenge the assaults on our rights and freedoms.



In a similar vein is **TTIP: The truth about the transatlantic trade and investment partnership** (Polity). Authors Ferdi deVille and Gabriel Siles-Brugge, tell us 'everything you need to know about the secret trade deal that will affect the lives of millions'.

REVIEWS EDITOR: **Vanessa Baird** email: vanessab@newint.org

Reviewers: Houman Barekat, Louise Gray, Malcolm Lewis, Chris Spannos, Peter Whittaker

STAR RATING

★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★ GOOD ★★ FAIR ★ POOR

Southern Exposure

Highlighting the work of artists
and photographers from the
Majority World

This photo, showing locals bathing in the Guayas River in Ecuador, was taken in 2005 as part of my documentary project, 'The Gulf of Oblivion', about the poor population of Santay Island. The island has been inhabited by 47 families since the 1950s; in 2010 it became a national protected area and is a popular tourist destination. Meanwhile, the inhabitants have been petitioning the state to recognize their collective right to the land. Though documentation only proves that they have lived on Santay Island for 70 years, the families' oral histories and the memories of the elders suggest that they have been there much longer.

Daniel Patino Flor majorityworld.com



Jon Cartwright

Down with love

Isn't it about time someone said it? Love is a dangerous concept.

And no, I'm not about to start listing the character flaws of some rogue I thought I could trust but who turned out to be more interested in his job, online pornography or my sister. On the contrary: the other half of my unconventional relationship is making me tea while I write this article in the middle of my busiest time of year at the Edinburgh Fringe. Trouble in paradise, then?

The notion of romantic, monogamous, heterosexual love as the solution to life, the universe and everything is marketed to us, especially us women, from birth in the most aggressive way. I recently saw princess wedding dresses in age 2-3 size at The Disney Store in Los Angeles. When the guy and the girl get together, it is the end of the movie. At best after that we see a quick montage of them swinging an adorable toddler through a meadow while the credits roll.

I'm not saying it's wrong to want that or, indeed, to have it. The issue is that, culturally, this model is more or less accepted without question as being 'ideal'.

In recent years, the campaign for gay and lesbian marriage has reaped great successes and, of course, if straight people have it, so should the LGBT community. But in many cases we may be fighting for their right to be just as miserable as the rest of us. We need to question the pervading cult of monogamy, not just open it up to new groups.

As if we needed proof that it doesn't work for everyone, look at the recent hacking scandal involving dating site Ashley Madison. Hackers leaked customer information from the site, which is aimed exclusively at married people who want to have affairs and has a reported 37 million users. If that many people are having affairs, you can pretty

safely assume there are millions more who want to but are compromising their own happiness because they're still hanging on to the Disney dream.

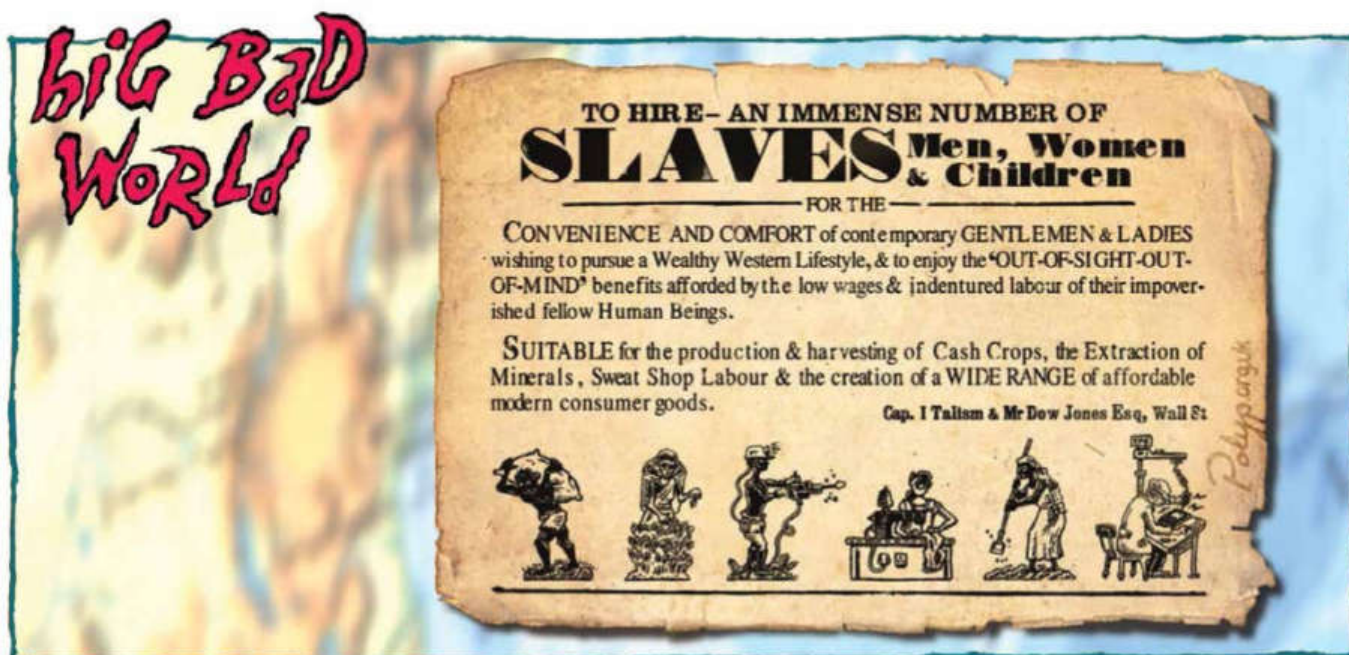
Not that I'm advocating clandestine cheating or lying to people. I think it's infinitely preferable to be honest about the lifestyle you want to lead. I can't help wondering how many of the Ashley Madison affair-seekers have stumbled across their own husband or wife among their potential matches!

Sadly, the relentless love-and-marriage hegemony makes it hard to discuss. We're all expected to play along with the happily-ever-after. Admitting your relationship is making you miserable is as socially unacceptable as telling a friend you think they should consider leaving their partner.

We also need to question the notion that romantic relationships are the only true source of happiness. We women are warned about the perils of focusing on our careers or other interests to the detriment of relationships. But relationships can be infuriating (thanks, James, put it on the side, I'll drink it in a minute) and jobs, campaigning work and hobbies can be fulfilling.

I think with great sadness of an older woman who bewailed to me her joyless relationship but added that she couldn't leave him because she'd 'never find anyone else'. Is it really so very outrageous to want to scream: 'So what?! Forget "finding someone else" and find all the people you want to spend time with, sexually or otherwise. The world is vast and full of interesting people and glorious opportunities for excitement and joy. Go on, I dare you: leave him...?' ■

Kate Smurthwaite is a comedian and activist.
katesmurthwaite.co.uk. @Cruella1



A Mars bar from Tommy Chocolate

The dodgy dealings of bankers and financial traders continue to amaze and appal us. But few people realize that they, rather than governments, control the very creation of money, as PETER STALKER explains.

In August 2015, jurors at London's Southwark Crown Court were drawn into the murky world of Pete the Greek, Fast Eddie, Golum, Pooks and Tommy Chocolate – nicknames for traders implicated in a vast financial conspiracy. In the event it was Tommy who spilled the beans and took the fall – sentenced to 14 years for manipulating a key financial indicator, the London Interbank Offer Rate, or Libor.

Most people do not know or care about Libor. But it matters. Libor is the average interest rate at which banks are prepared to lend money to each other. Libor is also used, though, as a benchmark for other rates, such as mortgages, in which you might have an interest. As an individual, you might have lost just a couple of pence or cents. However, those at the centre of the conspiracy, who were effectively betting in a rigged market, were able to rake off appetizing profits. In the three years he worked at UBS, Tommy, aka 35-year-old British trader Tom Hayes, scooped up around \$260 million for the bank. There were costs and payoffs along the way: in some cases he would offer his fellow conspirators deals worth up to \$100,000, though in others he secured co-operation for rather less – a bottle of Bollinger champagne or even a Mars bar.

The Libor scandal has already cost the banking industry in London and New York around \$9 billion in fines. And 11 more trials have been scheduled in London. But it is unlikely that the chief executives of the banks, who either knew about all this or turned a blind eye, will get their collars felt. Tommy's mistake was to leave an incriminating trail of emails and chat-room messages. Financial trails are usually more difficult to track. The money flows are so complex that no-one knows everything that is going on. The

bosses of financial institutions in particular are conveniently ignorant about what their underlings get up to.

Finance in all its forms, from banking to insurance to foreign-exchange trading, employs hundreds of thousands of such people, who earn substantial wages for just exchanging information. In the financial-services industry worldwide they manage around \$100 trillion. Nothing wrong with being paid to work with information, of course. Journalists do it all the time. Regrettably, journalism is less lucrative. Tommy earned around £400,000 per year at UBS, and then clocked up £3.5 million for just nine months at Citigroup. The *New Internationalist*, I can assure you, is less generous.

Wizards of debt

What exactly are these wizards doing? You might visualize them juggling pounds or dollars or euros, or their electronic equivalents. Indeed, you could leave the answer at 'moving money around'. But if you are curious about what money is, you might hesitate. Check an economics textbook and you may find it is a substitute for barter, a medium of exchange, a store of value, or a unit of account. But that disguises the underlying reality that all money is essentially debt. If you have cash in your wallet or money in the bank, this is something that the government or the bank owes you. In the case of the government this may not amount to much. On a £20 note, for example, the Bank of England says 'I promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of twenty pounds'. In other words it will cheerfully exchange one £20 note for another. In the US, the Secretary to the Treasury makes

Nowadays almost all money is created out of thin air by banks when they make loans

a more realistic promise on a dollar bill: 'This note is legal tender for all debts, public and private' – but hedges this with a prominent statement on the reverse: 'In God we trust'.

Where does all this money/debt come from? You might visualize a printing press. One of the more advanced is the government-owned enterprise, Note Printing Australia in Craigieburn, Melbourne, which has been one of the pioneers of printing notes on polymer rather than paper. But focusing on physical money, plastic or otherwise, will lead you astray. Nowadays almost all money is created out of thin air by banks when they make loans.

Surprisingly, it was only in 2014 that this was acknowledged in the Bank of England's *Quarterly Bulletin*. It pointed out that many statements in the textbooks are wrong. 'Where does money come from? In the modern economy, most money takes the form of bank deposits. But how those bank deposits are created is often misunderstood. The principal way in which they are created is through commercial banks making loans: whenever a bank makes a loan, it creates a deposit in the borrower's bank account, thereby creating new money.'

In other words, the bank does not wait for anyone to save money that might be lent to a borrower. If the borrower looks a safe bet, then through the magic of double-entry book-keeping it creates the necessary funds by making two new entries in its books. One is a new account on the debit side for the borrower; the other is a credit to the bank's accounts where the corresponding loan appears as an asset. The money has thus been conjured up from nothing. Indeed, if the borrower immediately changed her mind and paid it back, it would disappear again just as quickly in a puff of virtual smoke. In the UK, more than 90 per cent of all the money in the economy has been created in this way by banks. Globally, outstanding bank loans are around \$64 trillion.

Slippery operators

If banks could be trusted to manage all this new money well, we could leave it in their safe hands. But the incompetence and greed that led to the 2008 crisis, and a succession of scandals, of which Libor is just one, have left the reputation of the banking industry in tatters. Formerly viewed as solid pillars of society, bankers nowadays are suspected of being slippery operators who will recklessly gamble with our money, siphon off huge salaries and bonuses, and expect the government to bail them out when it looks as though their business is about to implode.

To avoid having to rescue banks,

governments around the world have sought to control them more tightly. The US has adopted a whole raft of new regulations, one of which has just come into force – the Volcker rule – that prevents banks from trading – that is, gambling – with their own funds. As a result, US banks are no longer looking so profitable, and cities like New York are now looking beyond finance and seeing their future more in entertainment and technology.

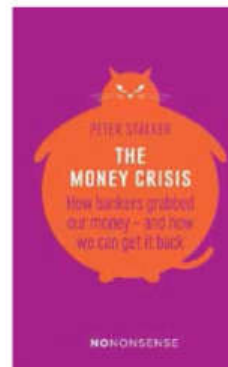
The UK is generally more sympathetic to banks. The new Conservative government, for example, when faced with the prospect of HSBC shifting its headquarters from London to Hong Kong, offered a sweetener by reducing the banking levy. HSBC, you may remember, has been laundering money for drug traffickers and terrorists, violating US sanctions against Iran and helping its customers with massive tax evasion in Switzerland.

Tommy Chocolate also knew that the UK was a softer touch for dodgy dealing. Had he been extradited to the US, he could have been behind bars for many decades – hence his decision to come clean in Britain.

These shenanigans may be seen as just the work of a few bad apples who have been attracted to work in the banks because that's where the money is made, meaning that we just need to jail the odd rogue and introduce a few more banking regulations. Unfortunately, the problems in the financial sector run much deeper. Furthermore, the way modern money is created is fundamentally flawed and no longer serves the public interest – we need to take back control of this from the banks. Read more about how we could do this in the new book *The Money Crisis: How the bankers grabbed our money and how we can get it back.* ■

The Money Crisis is one of four NoNonsense titles just published by New Internationalist. The others are: **Globalization:** *Buying and selling the world*, by Wayne Ellwood; **International Development:** *Illusions and Realities*, by Maggie Black; and **Renewable Energy:** *Cleaner, fairer ways to power the planet*, by Danny Chivers. newint.org/books/nononsense

'Peter Stalker's concise explanation of the money crisis does an excellent job of deconstructing finance.'
Walden Bello





Wolfgang Schäuble

Job: German Finance Minister

Reputation: Ruthless architect of the European Union's *Ancien Régime*



Holding court: the German finance minister has big plans for Europe.

Think Metternich. Think Henry

Kissinger. Think Dick Cheney. Like those wielders of malevolent charm, Schäuble is the kind of ruthless intellectual schemer the imperial order counts on to ensure its continued survival. Not for them the niceties of democracy or the petty desires of ordinary folk for a better life; steering the ship of state to maintain the privileges and power of our 'natural' superiors is what it's all about. Wolfgang has been a master at practising this art for the Christian Democratic Party since the early 1960s, managing the accounts of capitalist calculation in such key ministries as Interior and Finance. He has now emerged as a kind of chief disciplinarian of democratic excess in Germany and throughout Europe.

Schäuble earned his spurs as Interior Minister with his no-nonsense approach to the human rights of German dissenters generally, and

Muslim immigrants in particular. He went on to dismantle ruthlessly East Germany's public economy as part of the unification process, using an agency called Treuhand, whose heavy-handed approach took the blame for plunging East Germans into poverty. Today, Schäuble is setting up a similar fund in Greece to ensure debt obligations and encourage privatization. Angry Greek workers are likely to be even more recalcitrant than the East Germans were.

Schäuble's considerable skills have been on recent display in the slap-down (for the moment successful) of the Greek anti-austerity movement's attempts to squirm out of the perpetual recession that the infamous troika – the European Commission,

the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – imposed on the Greek economy. This unelected and unaccountable triumvirate is more concerned with the 'integrity' of Greece's obligations in the financial spider's web of debt than the desire of Greeks (expressed in a landslide referendum) to get out from under the international loan sharks. In this predictable melodrama, Schäuble plays the bad cop (allowing the IMF's Christine Lagarde and German Chancellor Angela Merkel a modicum of civility) and stonewalls even the most modest suggestions of debt relief. His puritanical rhetoric of responsibility and obligation masks a disdain for the desires of mere mortals to put food on their tables. 'The bankers must be paid' is the first and last commandment. Aristocratic arrogance towards democracy exacts a terrible price.

Make no mistake: this is a coup to short-circuit democratic outcomes by Schäuble and his circle, and it is not going to stop with Greece. The thing about reactionary heavyweights like Schäuble is that they are always many moves ahead in the great game of maintaining the status quo. His long-term plan is a rethinking of the European Union into a more centralized and autocratic form. Schäuble's idea is an integrated central core (Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and Germany) involving bureaucratic control of economic rules with a minimal democratic parliamentary fig leaf. The less prosperous and more unstable European periphery would then be policed by this imperial centre to guarantee that they do not stray from market discipline. A new European budgetary commissioner would be there to override any national budgets that endangered financial and corporate stability. This streamlined vision of a technocratic Europe (buffered from populist pressure) led the irreverent then-Greek finance minister Yanis Varoufakis (who sat across the bargaining table from Schäuble) to refer to our *éminence grise* as the 'intellectual force' behind the European Union. But for many Europeans these days, the EU is little more than a German collection agency. ■



LOW CUNNING: Combines high-minded writing (five learned tomes) with great prowess as a gutter fighter.

SENSE OF HUMOUR: The imperial wit of power – he offered US Treasury Secretary Jack Lew a trade of debt-ridden Greece for bankrupt Puerto Rico. Ha, ha!



Sources: The Guardian; neueurope.eu; The Economist; marketwatch.com; Wikipedia; yanisvaroufakis.eu; peoplesworld.org; spiegel.de

Puzzle Page by Axe

The crossword prize is a voucher for our online shop to the equivalent of \$30. Only the winner will be notified. Send your entries by 23 October to: New Internationalist Puzzle Page, The Old Music Hall, 106-108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JE, UK; fax to +44 1865 403346; or email a scan to: puzzlepage@newint.org
Winner for Crossword 203: Mike Hannah, Cambridgeshire, England.

Crossword 205

CRYPTIC Across

- 1 Icelandic volcano one needs to plug – this guy might (6)
- 4 English university river debate takes place near the Rhone (8)
- 10 One's after warp travel here in Australia (7)
- 11 Southern brother holds a kind of tool – he's good with his hands, this one (7)
- 12 Record holder, perhaps, when getting to ninety, being in a long time (2-3)
- 13 Somewhere in Sumatra is bad: Aachen as it turns out (5,4)
- 14 African girl accommodates N Europeans (8)
- 16 One massive 'Halt' to a salt? (5)
- 18 Federal unit of Brazil at the westernmost end: no other route to Ecuador (5)
- 20 First pair of pandas kicking, struggling, animated, land in Asia (8)
- 24 Mad bugger (bad mugger?) mugged bar 3 times over – a German place (9)
- 25 Radiation physicist's heading off for Alpine peak (5)
- 27 Obstinate resistant to change, has done minced hare stuffing (3-4)
- 28 Japanese island's fine in a way, but there's no end to it (7)
- 29 Part of the Pacific, key area with aluminium and sulphur deposits (5,3)
- 30 City on the Loire that infuriates (6)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Book of the New Testament aimed at Palestinians originally? (7)
- 2 Paradoxical – removing king results in order, of a sort, in Greece (5)
- 3 Six government posts in unnamed French city (7)
- 5 Years after, British chap's about to find a place in New York (6)

6 Mobile home for Georgia's neighbour? (7)

7 Old Ghana's Lagos code is abridged, incoherent over time (4,5)

8 Someone talking about you is in listening range? (7)

9 Mafia kidnap Frenchman, a *Société anonyme* initially, here in Kenya... (7)

15 ...it's called for in Paris (2,7)

17 Managed to move forward with Burmese capital in the old days (7)

18 Wandering DC, Omani's lost (7)

19 Scan the globe? (7)

21 Russian doffs cap to a Spaniard (7)

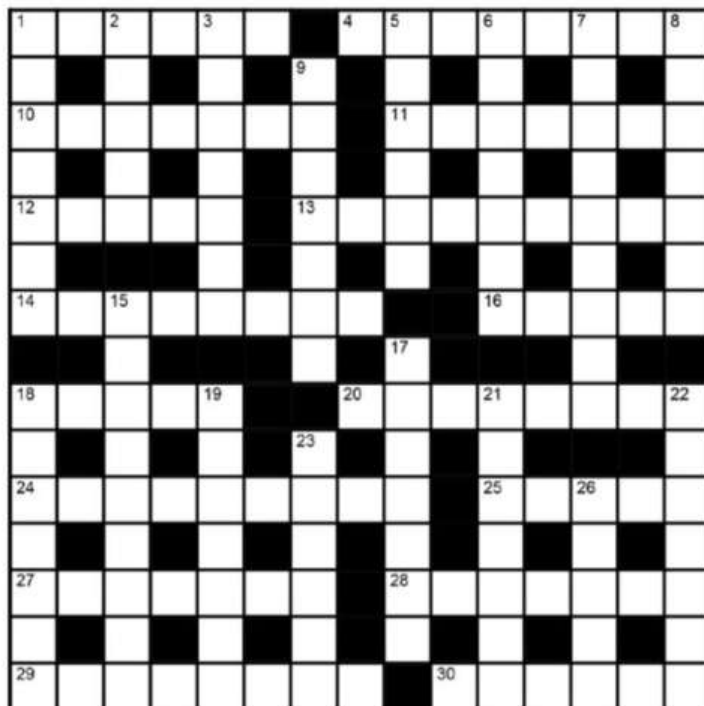
22 Standard, short answer? They were originally Vikings (7)

23 Scottish city's sand-fringed: Deauville, but empty (6)

26 Forest clearing found in Bangladesh (5)

QUICK Across

- 1 Island off Iceland evacuated in 1973 after its volcano erupted (6)
- 4 Southern French region known for its lagoons and white horses (8)
- 10 Former goldmining town in Victoria, Australia, originally Sandhurst (7)
- 11 Bruising street-fighter (7)
- 12 Former jailbird (2-3)
- 13 Sumatran city, close to the heart of the 2004 tsunami disaster (5,4)
- 14 Africans, historically Nubians (8)
- 16 Hold, stop (nautical) (5)
- 18 Brazilian super-region, home to Manaus, Belem and Boa Vista (5)
- 20 Asian country created in 1947 (8)
- 24 German river port on the Elbe (9)
- 25 Swiss mountain (3,970 m) (5)
- 27 Extremely stubborn (3-4)
- 28 Largest of Japan's Ryuku Islands (7)



29 Part of the SW Pacific administered by Australia (5,3)

30 Capital of ancient Anjou (6)

QUICK Down

- 1 NT book aimed at OT group (7)
- 2 Greek order of architecture (5)
- 3 Seat of the papacy 1309-78 (7)
- 5 Capital of New York State (6)
- 6 The Yellowhammer state, the 22nd of the Union (1819) (7)
- 7 Name of Ghana until 1957 (4,5)
- 8 Range of sound (7)
- 9 Main port of Kenya (7)
- 15 Required by etiquette, usage or fashion (French) (2,7)
- 17 Burmese capital, named 2006 (7)
- 18 Itinerant, like the Bedouin (7)
- 19 Visually scrutinize (7)

21 European of the W Mediterranean (7)

22 Scandinavian raiders who settled in NW France (7)

23 Scotland's fourth city, on the R Tay (6)

26 Tract of land with few or no trees in the middle of a wooded area (5)

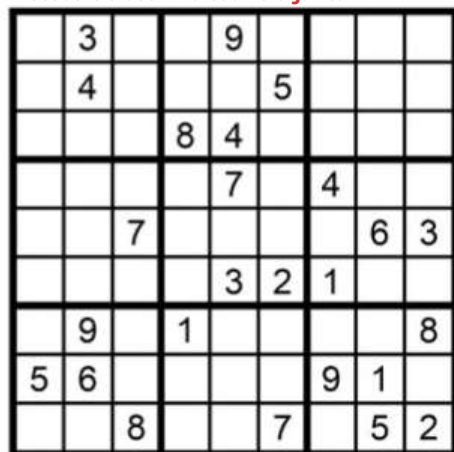
LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION

Across: Javanese, 9 Educated, 10 Bocage, 11 New river, 12 Naysayer, 13 Treble, 14 Zagros Mountains, 18 Apulia, 20 Alabaman, 23 Respighi, 24 Grozny, 25 Gomera, 26 Chaldean.

Down: 1 Baroda, 2 Makassar, 3 Heresy, 4 Leonardo da Vinci, 5 Keewatin, 6 Kurile, 7 Medellin, 15 Appleton, 16 Shanghai, 17 Anaconda, 19 Laptev, 21 Afghan, 22 Aeneas.

Sudoku 51

The Sudoku that thinks it's a word game!



Now, using the key below, substitute letters for the numbers in the north-east block...

1=P; 2=S; 3=A; 4=M; 5=D; 6=H; 7=R; 8=I; 9=E

...and make as many words as you can of five letters or more from the nine letters in the keyword, the extra clue to which is: 'Armed ship prepared for oriental Jews'. You cannot use the same letter more than once, nor use proper nouns (excepting the keyword), slang, offensive words, abbreviations, participles or simple plurals (adding an 's' or 'es').

GOOD 70 words of at least five letters, including 40 of six letters or more.

VERY GOOD 85 words of at least five letters, including 45 of six letters or more.

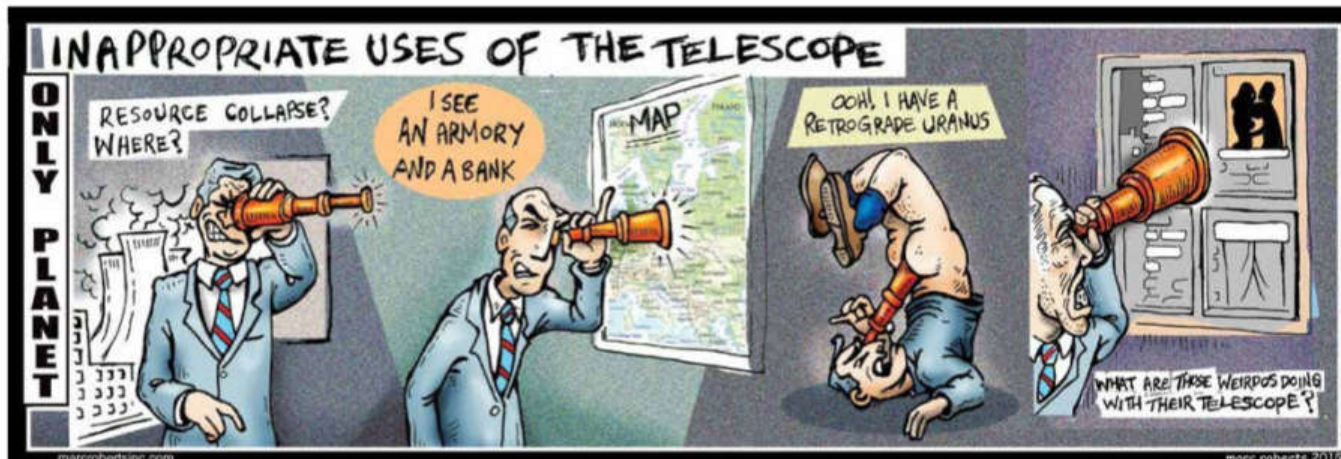
EXCELLENT 100 words of at least five letters, including 50 words of six letters or more.

Last month's **Sudoku keyword**: 'Maronites'

Solution to Wordsearch 50: The 19 oblasts (provinces) of the Russian Federation were: Amur, Chelyabinsk, Chita, Irkutsk, Ivanovo, Kirov, Kursk, Moscow, Omsk, Orel, Orenburg, Perm, Rostov, Sakhalin, Samara, Smolensk, Sverdlovsk, Tula, Tver.

Wordsearch 51

Find the 15 Latin American capitals hidden here.



And finally...

Meklit Hadero

The singer, musician and cultural activist talks to **GRAEME GREEN** about Ethiopia, equality and losing the ego.

Your family fled the violent revolution in Addis Ababa in 1974. What impact did that have on you?

You grow up with a mix of stories and silences. This is the legacy of any political upheaval. I left when I was two years old. I realized when I was 21 and visited the country for the first time as an adult that so many of my ideas of Ethiopia had been filtered through the stories of my parents, and I understood the country is much more than that. There were so many other aspects of the country and culture I didn't know.

Where do you call home now?

I have three places I think of as home: Addis Ababa, Brooklyn in New York, where I did most of my growing up and which left a huge impression on me, and the Bay Area in San Francisco. I don't think I could ever have one place as home. I don't mean a house, but as a concept.

What makes you happy?

Music. Playing it and achieving the sense of complete abandon to the song, to the moment, to the interaction with other musicians. Losing the 'I', the sense of the ego, to the spontaneity and improvisation when you're truly inside a song.

Can music help bring about change?

Yes. I think of myself as a singer, musician and cultural activist. I like to think about the ways that art and culture can be a vehicle for asking questions about where we're at and where we want to go collectively.

What is The Nile Project hoping to achieve?

It was started in 2011 by myself and Mina Girgis, an Egyptian ethnomusicologist, from a place of cultural curiosity. In the diaspora in San Francisco and New York and London, we're each other's neighbours and friends, and it's quite

easy to be connected, but on the African continent it's quite difficult to get to know one another. The project started as a way to bring together the music of the neighbours who share the Nile. When we started our research, we learned about the conflict over water. Right now things are pretty good between Nile Basin countries; Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt recently signed an agreement over how the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam is going to be managed and that's a huge step forward. But earlier it was quite tense. We realized that a music project to bring together musicians from the Nile region had the potential to have a positive impact beyond music. We've had three residencies and an African tour of five of the Nile countries, and we just toured North America.

Water could be a more pressing issue than oil in the future, couldn't it?

Yes, we depend on it. What's interesting is that a lot of the time nervousness about water scarcity relates to questions of identity: who you share water with is about who is included when we talk about 'we'. Music is quite an effective tool for addressing those identity issues.

You've also helped promote gender equality in Africa. Why do you think it's so important?

I was part of UN Women's theme song, 'One Woman', and inaugurated their campaign for gender equality in Africa with a concert in Addis Ababa. With the Nile Project, we were insistent from the beginning that the project had equal representation of women – not just singers, but composers and songwriters, too. When we're talking about equal rights

for women it's very easy, especially in the eyes of the West, immediately to make an African woman a victim. But we're saying there's a generation of women who are coming up as leaders in their communities, breaking these barriers.

What's your biggest fear?

In some ways, fear is about boundaries. When I think of fear, it is like an indicator that there's a boundary for you, something you have to look out for, to be aware of, to pay attention to. So fear isn't always a bad thing. ■

Meklit's new album, *We Are Alive*, is out now on Six Degrees – meklitmusic.com. For more on The Nile Project, see new.nileproject.org

Graeme Green is a journalist and photographer: [@greengraeme](https://twitter.com/greengraeme)



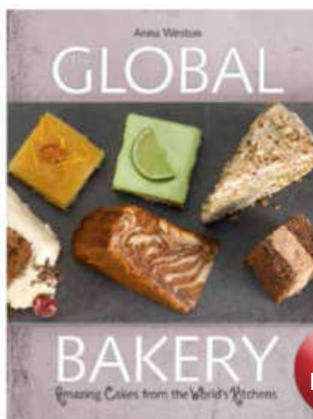


VEGAN LOVE STORY

Price \$29.95 Code BVEGE

tibbits is one of London's top vegan/vegetarian restaurants and Hiltl, in Zurich, is the oldest vegetarian restaurant in the world. The two families bring you their innovative, tried-and-tested vegan dishes with influences from all over the world. Beautiful photography throughout. Hardback. Size: 27.6cm x 20.8cm. 232 pages.

NEW

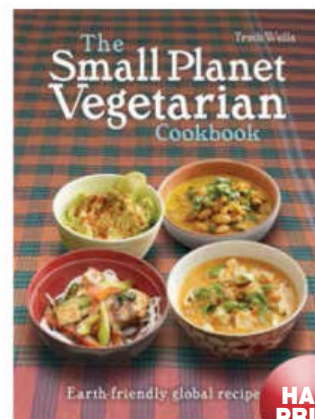


GLOBAL BAKERY

Price \$12.50 Code BGLOB

Gathers over 60 cake recipes from all around the world in one volume. With all occasions catered for, you'll go on an epic journey of taste with home-baker extraordinaire Anna Weston, discovering the world's favourite cakes along the way. Includes vegan, gluten-free and wheat-free recipes to suit all tastes. Hardback. Size: 25cm x 19cm. 184 pages.

HALF PRICE

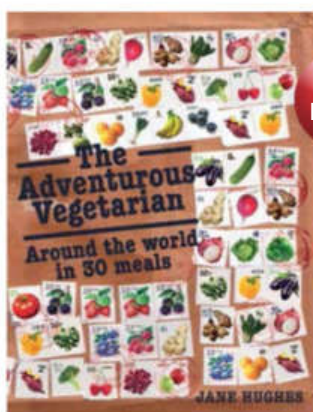


SMALL PLANET VEGETARIAN COOKBOOK

Price \$17.48 Code BSPK

Earth-friendly global recipes in mezze or tapas style. Delicious dishes with a whole array of different combinations to try. Hardback. Size: 25cm x 18cm. 256 pages.

HALF PRICE

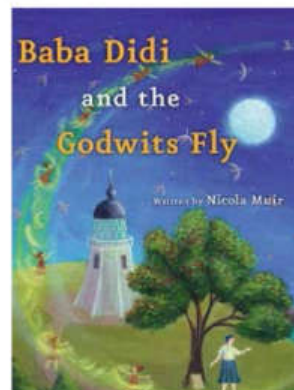


THE ADVENTUROUS VEGETARIAN

Price \$14.98 Code BADV

30 countries; 30 sumptuous menus offering everything you need to give your friends and family a taste of how other vegetarians eat. Written by the editor of the UK Vegetarian Society in collaboration with groups all over the world. Photography throughout. Hardback. Size: 25cm x 18cm. 296 pages.

HALF PRICE



BABA DIDI AND THE GODWITS FLY

Price \$9.95 Code BBAB

The enchanting story of a fantastical flight, and of the courage and endurance it takes for birds – and people – to keep going to reach a safe destination. A beautifully illustrated story for children aged 4-9. The book has a foreword by Helen Clark, the former NZ prime minister who is now head of the UN Development Programme. Royalties support UNICEF. Hardback. Size: 27cm x 21cm. 28 pages.



AMNESTY CHRISTMAS CARDS

All cards carry the message 'Season's Greetings' in nine languages. Ten cards of one design in each pack. All cards \$12.95



AN ANGEL'S SONG

Code X202

Size: 15cm x 10.5cm.



CHRISTMAS GOLDCRESTS

Code X216

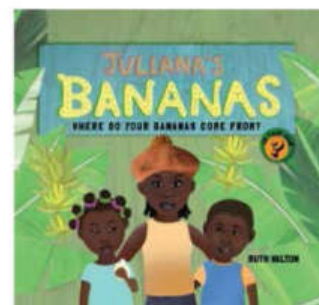
Size: 12cm x 12cm.



FINGERPRINT CANDLE

Code X207

Size: 15cm x 10.5cm.



JULIANA'S BANANAS

Price \$11.95 Code BBAN

Follow the story of Juliana and her children to learn how the Windward Islands' fairtrade bananas are grown and transported to our shelves. Packed with colourful illustrations and featuring lots of facts about fairtrade and some yummy banana recipes. Hardback. Size: 18cm x 22cm. 32 pages. Ages: 4-7.



FLIGHT TO FREEDOM

Code X210

Size: 12cm x 12cm.



KEEPING THE FLAME

Code X211

Size: 12cm x 12cm.



BULLFINCH WOODCUT

Code X212

Size: 14cm x 14cm.



COSY CHRISTMAS CAT

Code X205

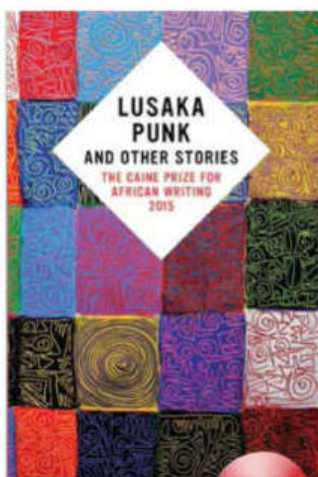
Size: 12cm x 12cm.



SILENT FLIGHT

Code X213

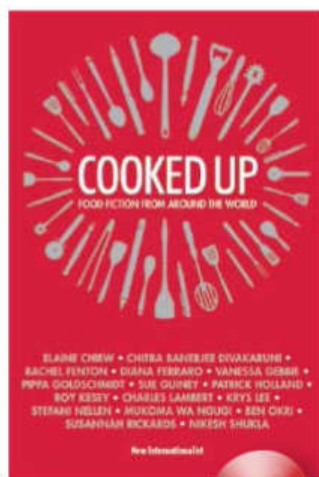
Size: 14cm x 14cm.



LUSAKA PUNK AND OTHER STORIES - THE CAINE PRIZE 2015

Price \$14.95 Code BCP15
The Caine Prize for African Writing 2015 is the best yet. Read the 5 shortlisted authors' stories along with 12 other stories from the best new writers. Insightful, arresting and entertaining. Paperback.
Size: 19.4cm x 13cm. 268 pages.

NEW



COOKED UP

Price \$16.95
Code BCOOK
An international banquet of exceptional stories for those who love both the short story and food, featuring Ben Okri, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Krys Lee, among others. Fiction with real bite and an uplifting cross-cultural reading experience. Paperback.
Size: 19.4cm x 13cm. 208 pages.

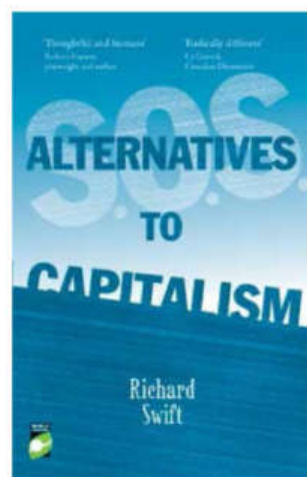
NEW



GOODBYE GOD?

Price \$14.95
Code BGOD
The ever-topical science vs religion debate is given unique perspective entertaining and enlightening comic strip. Brings together a wealth of facts, figures and the views of some of our most distinguished scientists, philosophers and atheists. Paperback.
Size: 24cm x 17cm. 120 pages.

NEW



SOS ALTERNATIVES TO CAPITALISM

Price \$16.95
Code BATC
People are dissatisfied with capitalism but we are continually told that no other choices exist. This book shows that there are other ways. Paperback.
Size: 21.6cm x 13.8cm. 208 pages.

NONONSENSE

Price \$13.95 each
The acclaimed series relaunched this year with striking new cover designs, clearer-than-ever layout and incisive writing for the student and the general reader. Paperback, page lengths vary. Size: 18cm x 10cm.

'These short books supply us with clear, well-written and memorable analyses that cut to the chase.'
Susan George, President of the Transnational Institute and author

SPECIAL OFFER 4 FOR 3

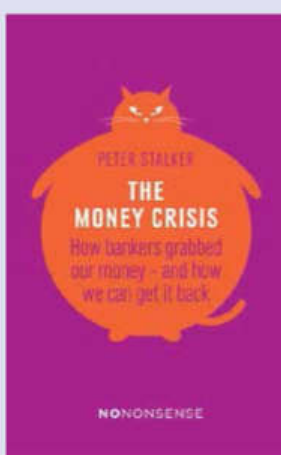
Price \$41.85
Code NN4

THE MONEY CRISIS

Code NOMC
How we've made such a mess of our money system is explained, from the earliest banks right through to 'collateralized debt obligations'. A must-read for everyone who wants a fairer financial world. 144 pages.

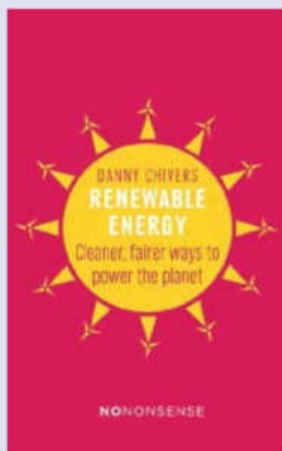
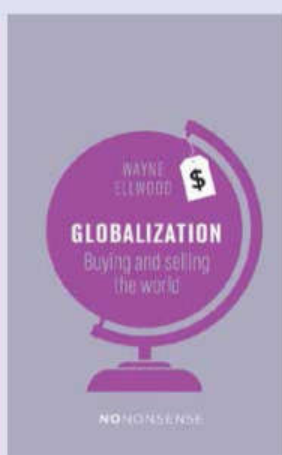
GLOBALIZATION

Code NOGL
With over 70,000 copies sold, this is one of the key critical texts on economic globalization and its effects. Fully revised and updated. 168 pages.



INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Code NOID
With over 50,000 copies sold, this is fast becoming one of the most accessible and influential books on the subject. Fully revised and updated. 160 pages.



RENEWABLE ENERGY

Code NORW
A 100% renewable world is possible. This book covers all the latest technologies and a roadmap to powering the world, not just sustainably, but democratically. 176 pages

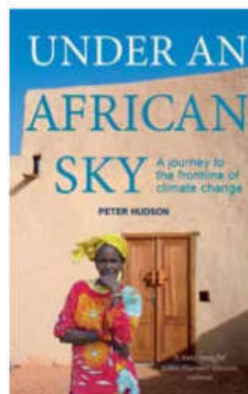


WHY THINGS ARE GOING TO GET WORSE - AND WHY WE SHOULD BE GLAD

Price \$16.95
Code BWHY
Written by *Financial Times* journalist Michael Roscoe. We must forget about growth, recognize that all wealth comes from the earth and share earnings more fairly. Paperback.
Size: 22cm x 14cm. 352 pages.

DIGITAL REVOLUTIONS

Price \$16.95
Code BDREV
There is no doubt that the internet and social media have played a critical role in recent movements and campaigns but how far can we attribute accomplishments to technology and are there limitations we should be aware of? Activist and writer Symon Hill investigates. Size: 21.6cm x 13.8cm. 160 pages.



Under An African Sky: A JOURNEY TO THE FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Price \$16.95
Code BVILL
'Peter Hudson's lyrical book about the village (in Mauritania) he has been visiting for the last 20 years gives rare insight to the problem their brave people face' - Robin Hanbury-Tenison
Paperback.
Size: 22cm x 14cm. 240 pages.